Reflexions

UPON

Ancient and Modern

PHILOSOPHY,

AND

On the USE that is to be made thereof in RELIGION.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

The PREFACE.

I Do not pretend that these Reflexions are to be maintained as Theſes: *they are but Remarks that I have made in reading of Authors, and Obſervations on their Sentiments, which as Conjectures I ſubmit to publick examination, and wherein I deſire my ſelf to be cleared. The chief Deſign of this Treatiſe is, to give vertuous people the true Notion of a Science, which is the Rule of other Sciences; and to declare what hath been the uſe of it in the firſt and laſt Ages, in an hiſtorical account of the progreſs, decay, and of all the revolutions which that Science hath undergone, for above the ſpace of two thouſand years; to the end that in this Abridgment, wherein I have endeavoured to comprehend ſo many things, what is ſtrong and weak, ſolid and frivolous, true and falſe in Philoſophy may be diſcerned.*

A Deſign, ſo far above the capacity of

a private perſon would be raſh, if to prepare me for ſo great an undertaking, I had not conſulted the Learned of all Ages upon that ſubject. This obliges me in the entry to declare, that I ſay little or nothing of my own head, and that I ſpeak not of the Ancients and Moderns, but by the ſentiments of thoſe who have known them beſt. The intelligent, without advertiſement, will by their own eyes eaſily perceive the truth of what I ſay: ſo that I need not burden a Book with Citations, whereof it is but already too full. Nor is it to play the Doctor, that now and then I ſpeak in a ſtrain ſomewhat dogmatical: it is only that I may more plainly repreſent to the Learned, what they already know, and revive their Notions thereof.

But though I might give the learneded of the Ancients and Moderns for my vouchers in this particular, yet I pretend not that they ſhould be accountable for all that I ſay; for I may have miſtaken in citing of them: and therefore I am willing that men ſhould know that whatever is good in this Work is theirs, and what is otherways mine own.

For

For beſides that it is ridiculous to pretend to Infallibility, I am very ſenſible that one cannot even be exact when he graſps ſo many various matters. If Strabo *and* Diogenes Laertius *have miſtaken in the Hiſtory of the ancient Philoſophers, may not I be deceived in the account of the new? So that I ſhall ſay nothing as to that for my own juſtification, but what every one may tell himſelf in my favour, when he ſhall be pleaſed to reflect thereon.*

The greateſt difficulty in this work hath been to give Form to ſo vaſt a Matter; ſeeing the ſeveral Claſſes of ſo many different Sects, after all the Authors that have wrote thereon, are not as yet well adjuſted. For Plutarch *doth not diſtinguiſh, and* Diogenes Laertius *confounds them.* Varro *reckons them up to two hundred and fourſcore, and* Themiſtius *to three hundred. But becauſe that ſcantling alone would be too large, I have reduced them all to ſeven principal Sects. The firſt is the Sect of* Pythagoras, *which is much the ſame with that of the* Egyptians: (*for there is little or nothing of truth known of the*

Philoſophy of the Phenicians *and* Ethiopians.) *The ſecond is the Sect of* Socrates *and* Plato, *of the* Ancient *and* new Academicks, *of the* Pyrrhoniſts *and* Scepticks, *which is originally one and the ſame. The third is that of* Ariſtotle *and the* Peripateticks. *The Fourth that of* Zeno *and the* Stoicks, *which in a right line deſcends from* Antiſthenes, Diogenes, Crates, *and the* Cynicks. *The fifth that of the* Epicureans, *which is derived from* Leucippus, Democritus, *and* Ariſtippus. *The ſixth that of the* Eclecticks, *whoſe Founder was* Potamon *of* Alexandria. *And the ſeventh is the Sect of the* Arabians, *the* Averroiſts, *and the Scholaſticks, or Schoolmen, which is almoſt the ſame that at preſent reigns in Univerſities. Theſe are the limits within which I have confined my ſelf. And on theſe Sects only I make theſe Reflexions, which I have mingled with moral Maxims, and hiſtorical hints, that I may render ſo dry a matter as Philoſophy ſomewhat agreeable.*

Now, as to the Stile: I have thought fit to expreſs my ſelf plainly on a ſubject that requires no affectation. I have not

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medled with the diſcuſſing of the Precepts that are current in the Schools, that I might not flag too low; I ſtick only to general Maxims, and dive no deeper: wherein I have endeavoured to imitate Cicero, *who in his Books of Philoſophy never almoſt engages in the retail of the Opinions whereof he ſpeaks, but ſo far as he can do it without the loſs of his uſual politeneſs. For the reproach which he caſts upon* Varro *ſtrikes at himſelf* (Philoſophiam multis locis inchoâſti, ad impellendum ſatis, ad edocendum parum. You have wrote enough of Philoſophy to excite mens minds, but little to inſtruct them.) *He explains only the Principles and general Maxims of every Sect, which he accompanies with ſome Reflexions. This I have done, that I might accommodate my ſelf to the reliſh of an age, which is more affected with good ſenſe than great learning. And ſeeing in the ſtock of theſe Reflexions there will be found a Satyr againſt falſe Philoſophy, and an Elogie of the true; I am ſure thereby not to diſpleaſe the vertuous, which is the moſt conſiderable Sect of Philoſophers. And it is indeed*

indeed only for their ſakes that I have ſet upon this Deſign, that I may give them the knowledg which reaſonable men ought to have of Philoſophy, and whereof many times men have but falſe Ideas. I have concluded this Treatiſe with the Uſe that ſhould be made of it in matters of Religion, which men oftentimes but little regard, when they affect too much to be Philoſophers. And ſeeing men take not always the care they ſhould, to publiſh nothing but what deſerves publick view; I confeſs that I have not perhaps taken time enough, to give this Treatiſe its utmoſt perfection. But I hope, as I am ready to make uſe of the advices that are given me, ſo I ſhall remedy that in a ſecond Edition: to the end that I may make an exact Collection of ſix Volumes which I have written on Poetry, Eloquence, and Philoſophy.

Reflexions ON PHILOSOPHY in General.

THE Name of Philoſopher, how ſimple and modeſt ſoever it be, ſeemed heretofore ſo glorious and lovely to the Learned of ancient Times, that they preferr'd it to the moſt ſplendid and lofty Titles. That love of Wiſdom and ſtudy of Vertue, whereof they made Profeſſion, raiſed them to ſuch Authority over the minds of men, that their Example ſerved for Inſtruction, and their Maxims were re-

ceived as Oracles by the publick. Great men asked them Counſel in the Affairs of weightieſt importance: Cities and Provinces ſubmitted to their conduct; and Kings themſelves reckoned it their glory to be their Diſciples. It is true Philoſophy taught *Pythagoras* the integrity of manners and auſterity of life, which gained him ſo many Followers. It was Philoſophy that made *Empedocles* refuſe a Crown, and preſer a private and quiet life to all the magnificence of Grandeur. By Philoſophy *Democritus* was raiſed to the contemplation of Nature, and renounced bodily pleaſures, that he might more peaceably enjoy the delights of the Soul. Philoſophy taught *Socrates* to dye without haughtineſs or weakneſs: and though in the death of *Cato*, who affected too much the Philoſopher, there appeared leſs modeſty and tranquillity; yet therein are alſo to be ſeen the lineaments of a greatneſs of mind, which made him deſpiſe life. So that there being hardly any action of conſtancy and ſtedfaſtneſs in Paganiſm, which

which was not animated by Philoſophy: It may be ſaid, that it was in ſome manner the principle and ſource of the pureſt vertue of Heathens.

II.

The *Egyptians*, who were the firſt Philoſophers in the world, gave ſo myſterious a garb to their Philoſophy, that they made it paſs with the People for a part of their Religion: Nor did any thing advance it more in authority with the publick, or give it greater credit among the Learned. But their Prieſts had no other end in ſhrowding their Obſervations of Nature, under the Veil of their Hieroglyphicks, but to keep them from the knowledge of the people, and thereby to diſtinguiſh themſelves from the vulgar. As they propagated their Philoſophy only by Tradition, and did not willingly communicate their knowledge to other people; ſo (as *Strabo* obſerves) there is but little known of their true Doctrine. The truth is, all that is ſaid of Philoſophy, before it became to be known in *Greece*, hath ſo little foundation;

and all the discourses that are found of it in the Fragments of *Sotion*, *Hermippus* and *Hermodorus*, whereof *Diogenes Laertius* makes mention, aswell as in the Dialogue of *Lucian*'s Fugitives, are so fabulous, that I intend only, as to what concerns the beginning thereof, to adhere to that which is to be found in History, that I may give a more certain account of the same. Besides, that mysterious Philosophy of the *Egyptians*, is so little different from that of *Pythagoras*, that the method and principles of both are almost the same; as appears by what *Plutarch* tells us in several of his works, *Jamblicus* in the life of *Pythagoras*, *Selden*, and some others who have treated on that subject.

III.

The *Grecians*, who shewed greater passion for the discovery of truth, than other Nations, gave themselves so earnestly to the observation of Nature, that from *Thales* to *Plato* there were more Truths concerning Natural Philosophy discovered, than in the Ages following.

following. It muſt be acknowledged likewiſe, that Philoſophy in its infancy began to produce ſo great wits, and that it ſhewed ſo much reaſon in its primitive famblings, that its firſt rudiments ſerved for principles, and even for models to the following Ages. By long and conſtant ſtudy men obſerved the motion of the Heavens, diſtinguiſhed their revolutions, framed the firſt Ideas of a Cœleſtial Syſteme, diſcovered the obliquity of the Zodiack, unfolded the moſt hidden things of Nature, and drew that Curtain wherewith Providence had hid the greateſt part of its ſecrets, to preſent them to men as a matter of meditation and enquiry. And amongſt thoſe that laboured in the ſearch of theſe Verities, *Thales*, *Anaximander*, *Anaxagoras*, *Heraclitus*, *Hippocrates*, *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, and *Archelaus*, obtained the greateſt reputation. *Plutarch*, who in the ſecond Tome of his Works gives the Hiſtory of their Opinions, does indeed ſhow the contradictions and abſurdities whereinto for moſt

part they fell: Nevertheleſs they ſtill deſerve the praiſe to have been the firſt that ventured upon that ſo difficult an attempt, and by unknown Paths traced the way to thoſe that followed them, rendring themſelves conſiderable to Poſterity, by the foundation they laid to Sciences. *Juſtin* in his Hiſtory obſerves, that whilſt ſtudy and meditation made Philoſophers in *Greece*, Nature alone without any aſſiſtance made the like amongſt the Barbarians in the middle of *Scythia*; as appears in *Abaris* and *Anacarſis*, of whom *Apuleius* ſpeaks, who without precepts and diſcipline attained to Wiſdom.

IV.

To ſpeak then properly, *Thales* and *Pythagoras* were the two Founders of the ancient Philoſophy; the one in *Greece*, and the other in *Italy*. There appeared in the School of *Pythagoras* ſomewhat more regular and better eſtabliſhed, than in that of *Thales* and his Succeſſors. As in the Doctrine of *Pythagoras* every thing was made

made myſterious; ſo ſubmiſſion was its principal Character: that religious ſilence which with ſo much rigour he made his Diſciples obſerve, was an art to procure himſelf a more reſpectful attention. The life of that Philoſopher, as well as his Doctrine, is at this day ſtill a great ſubject of controverſie: he was indeed a man of a deep reach, a quick and penetrating apprehenſion, and of indefatigable induſtry and application. His uſual way of teaching, was by Geometry and Numbers: he explained material and ſenſible things by Geometry, and intellectual by Muſick and Numbers. He was of too ſolid a judgment, to imagine any reality in Numbers, which are but only intentional Beings, as *Ariſtotle* proves in his Metaphyſicks. It is true he found ſo great a facility in explaining the perfection of every thing by harmony and proportion, after the manner of the *Egyptians*, that he expreſſed himſelf no other way: and that he made uſe of Numbers as of Symbols and Signs to teach with: and all that

Science of Numbers, which was so familiar to *Pythagoras*, is to this day still a kind of mystery, whereof the secret is not very well known. *Jamblicus* in the life of that Philosopher says, that he invented a musick proper for the cure and quieting of the Passions. In his Moral Philosophy there is nothing regular; only fair Maxims without Principles: his Natural Philosophy is the same almost with that of the *Platonists*. His Doctrine of two Principles, the one of good and the other of evil, on which the *Manichees* built their belief, is false; for of real Beings there is but one real Principle. *Pythagoras* in *Plutarch* boasts, that the greatest fruit which he had reaped from Philosophy was, not to wonder at any thing: because that Philosophy discovered to him the cause of every thing, as *Horace* expresses it to *Numicius*,

Nil admirari prope res est una Numici.

In fine, *Pythagoras* had so [illegible] a [illegible] the

the other Philosophers have gloried to stick to his sentiments: *Socrates* and *Plato* have hardly any thing that is good but from him. And if we consider more narrowly, we shall even find, that amongst all other Sects almost, there is somewhat of the Spirit of *Pythagoras* that bears rule.

V.

SOCRATES.

Socrates was the first that began to reduce into method the confused Ideas of those that went before him, by ranking the Observations which he had made of Nature, in a more regular order, that he might shape them into Arts and Sciences. Though he had all the charms of wit, which flow from a pregnant genius and happy disposition, yet he wanted not depth, and all imaginable solidity. And that height of knowledge and understanding was accompanied with the true simplicity of a Child: When he applyed himself to every thing, he learned not curiously in any thing: He handled [illegible]

matters in a pleaſing ſtrain; and his moſt ſerious meditations deprived him not of his good humour. As he never affected to talk like a wit, but as a vertuous man, ſo his ordinary jeſts were noble. He was capable of every thing, and proud of nothing. His notices, that gave inſtruction to others, and made them of Scholars become learned men, ſerved only to puzle and entangle himſelf, by the doubts and uncertainties which they raiſed in him: And for all he was ſo rational, yet he too much diſtruſted his Reaſon. The fertility of his wit ſo choaked his diſcerning, that his different views led him into irreſolution. By his ingenuity in declaring on all occaſions, that he knew nothing, he rendred the other Philoſophers of his time ridiculous, who brag'd that they knew every thing: And the ignorance he made profeſſion of, acquired him greater reputation than all his knowledge. He ſuffered thoſe that diſputed with him to take all the advantage over him they pleaſed, that he might refute them

them with ſo much the more authority, as he took the leſs. He procured an abſolute power over their ſentiments, by the deference that he yielded to them: it was only by hiding his Opinion, that he forced others to follow it: And the Empire that he exerciſed over mens minds, was but an effect of the skill he had not to uſurp any, by the indifferency which he made appear for his own ſentiments: as *Cicero* ſays, *Socrates ipſe ſibi detrahens, in diſputatione plus tribuebat iis, quos volebat refellere.* But as he was the head of all the Sects that followed him; ſo was he alſo in ſome manner the Founder of all the doubts that aroſe amongſt them. For his Reaſonings tended commonly to the baffling of Reaſon: And as he eſtabliſhed Sciences, ſo he left occaſion to overthrow them; becauſe he taught his Scholars not ſo much to know, as to doubt of things. Not, but that for all this he much contributed to give Philoſophy the Form it hath taken ſince: For he it was that drew the firſt draught of Logick and Moral Philoſophy,

ſophy, and gave Principles to Natural Philoſophy: But by prying into this, according to the quality of his wit, with too much quaintneſs, he refined every thing ſo much, that he handled theſe matters with leſs ſolidity than his Succeſſors. Not, but that his judgment is alſo of great authority, when he affirms any thing; but his Sentiments are rather Principles than Deciſions: and all things rightly conſidered, his Philoſophy is more proper to overthrow than eſtabliſh. He had moreover with his ſimplicity a great Soul; for *Lyſias* having read to him in his Priſon a Diſcourſe that he had made in his defence, he choſe rather to dye than make uſe of it; becauſe it defended him not with dignity enough: and ſo he dyed ſedately and in cold blood, which amazed his Judges.

VI.

PLATO.

Plato has the ſmoothest tongue of Antiquity, and takes pleaſure to make men hear him attentively, though he

he is not much concerned whether they believe him or not: he is always florid, but not always ſolid. The falſe reliſh that was then in vogue, through the credit of the Sophiſts, obliged him to that flouriſh of expreſſion which he uſed. He is witty, quick, and elegant, and as ingenious as man can be; and with little coherence and method, he obſerves in his diſcourſe a ſecret œconomy which fails not to hit the mark. And ſeeing he teaches only by way of Dialogue, that he may follow a free and diſengaged ſtile, which has the air of Converſation; he is rich in Prefaces, and magnificent in his entry on Diſcourſes; but he decides but little, no more than *Socrates*, and eſtabliſhes almoſt nothing at all. However what he ſays is ſo naturally expreſt, that nothing can be imagined more taking. The ſlight matters which he mingles with great in his diſcourſes, and the trifles wherewith he circumſtantiates what is eſſential and weighty in the ſubjects he treats of, render him alluring; and it is by that way alone that he

amuſes,

amuſes. But through the great deſire he hath to be pleaſing, he is too much for telling of wonders: moſt part of his diſcourſes are nothing elſe but Fables, Metaphors, and continual Allegories; he affects often to be myſterious in what he ſays, that he may keep himſelf the more within the verge of his Character; and it is commonly by lying that he undertakes to perſwade truth. *Rhodiginus* pretends that his ſenſe is more to be minded than his words, which are often allegorical. Moreover he was too much a Politician for a Philoſopher: For in one of his Letters to *Dionyſius* of *Siracuſa* he acknowledges, that he publiſhed none of his Maxims, but under the name of *Socrates*, that he might not be accountable for his own Doctrine, in a time when the nicety of the People of *Athens* was offended at every thing. The condemnation of *Socrates* made him ſo cautious, that to be in good terms with the Publick, and to diſpoſſeſs the People of the opinion, that he was addicted to the Sentiments of his Maſter,

Maſter, he turned *Pythagorean*. Though he was a man of vaſt capacity, (for, *what did he not know*, ſays *Quintilian*?) and had a wonderful Genius for Sciences, whereof he ſpeaks always better than others did; yet it muſt be acknowledged, that he gave greater reputation to Philoſophy, by the conduct of his Life and Vertue, than by his Doctrine: For he it was that firſt taught, that true Philoſophy conſiſted more in Fidelity, Conſtancy, Juſtice, Sincerity, and in the love of ones Duty, than in a great Capacity. After his death his Diſciples ſo altered his Doctrine, and filled his School with ſuch rigid Opinions, that ſcarcely could there be known amongſt them the leaſt print of the true Doctrine of *Plato*: which was divided into ſo many Sects, as there ſtarted up Philoſophers in the Ages following.

VII.

ARISTOTLE.

Ariſtotle is a Wit ſo far above others, that few know him: For by an unparallel'd

rallel'd reach of understanding he soars above the highest: He is an Eagle that mounts so high, that men easily lose sight of him; and there is so much force in his thoughts, so great elevation in his sentiments, that he cannot be followed. He it was who first collected the several parts of Philosophy, that he might unite them into one body, and reduce them to a compleat Systeme. No man had ever so great a discerning of truth and falshood, as that Philosopher; for he not only dived into Reason, that he might discover it, under what cloud soever it hid it self; but upon discovery thereof, had the art to make it even perceptible to others in all its force, and intelligible in its full extent: so happy and penetrating was his genius. By that quality of mind he became so exact an observer of the Works of Nature, that *Plato* called him, *the Genius of Nature*, as if Nature had made use of his Spirit as an instrument to discover her Secrets: In all his sentiments there [illegible] judicious Character, which

which always ſatisfies the mind; ſo regular and ſolid he is: and there is hardly ever any thing ſaid reaſonably in Philoſophy, which bears not ſome ſignature and impreſſion of the ſpirit of *Ariſtotle*. So that all the Judgments that have been made on his Doctrine in ſucceeding Ages, have only differed according to the greatneſs and mediocrity of light and knowledge, that have ſwayed them: For in a word, none have given greater weight to humane Reaſon, nor carried it farther than *Ariſtotle*. His method is more ſolid than that of all others, becauſe his principles are better founded on Reaſon, and his Reaſon more grounded on Experience. But when he ſpeaks, one cannot tell whether it be to hide his doubts, or to make himſelf reverenced, that he is obſcure. It ſeems he writes only that he may not be underſtood; and that his Works are not ſo much to inſtruct his own Age, as to give exerciſe to the following: Therefore it is, that *Diogenes Laertius* compares him to that Fiſh that troubles the

Water for fear of being taken. But there is ſome Juſtice due to *Ariſtotle*, as to that reproach which is caſt upon him: His obſcurity is not ſo much the defect of his underſtanding, as of his ſubject matter; and in the manner how he fathoms things, it is not very eaſie to pierce the darkeſt clouds of Nature, to unfold her moſt hidden ſecrets, to dig into nothing but abyſſes, to walk only on precipices, not to purſue truth but by ways unknown to all other heads, and to be intelligible to all men: And that is the reaſon that the diſcourſes of *Ariſtotle* have always more politeneſs and force than perſpicuity; becauſe he confines himſelf to a ſhort and conciſe ſtile, the conſtraint whereof will not allow but a perplexed elocution: And that is alſo the reaſon that he writes in a manner more apt to amaze than perſwade his Readers. One muſt have heard him, ſays *Pſellus*, to be able to comprehend his Doctrine. He masked ſometimes with an affected obſcurity, what *Pythagoras* diſguiſed under Symbols, and *Plato* under

under Allegories. But in fine, there is ſo great a depth of judgment to be found in all that *Ariſtotle* ſaid, when one can penetrate into it, that he is not to be found fault with, if he have not always the art to make himſelf be underſtood. It is in vain therefore, that a brood of ſtinted ſpirits have let flye againſt the reputation of that great man, under the conduct of *Teleſius*, *Patricius*, *Bacon*, *Campanella*, and ſome others, to diſcredit his Doctrine in theſe laſt Ages; who by cenſuring *Ariſtotle* have pretended to be wiſer than all the Ages and Nations that have eſteemed him.

VIII.

Philoſophy did ſhortly after degenerate from the Nobility of its Extraction, there being none in the following Ages that came near the knowledge of thoſe great men who were its Founders; and that purity which it preſerved in its beginning, was quickly ſullied by the multitude of Sects that ſprang up ſince. Then began Philoſophy to put on all the ſhapes and figures

which the paſſions of men gave it, according to the different inclinations and various intereſts that prevailed in ſucceeding Ages. For beſides that the School of *Zeno* was full of counterfeit Vertues, and that of *Epicurus* ſtuffed with real Vices, Philoſophy became impious under *Diagoras*, impudent under *Diogenes*, ſelfiſh under *Demochares*, cenſorious under *Lyco*, voluptuous under *Metrodorus*, fantaſtical under *Crates*, licentious under *Pyrrho*, litigious under *Cleantes*, turbulent under *Arceſilas*, and took the humour of a Buffoon under *Menippus*, and ſpirit of contradiction under *Lacydes*: In a word, it was abandoned to all the ramblings that the mind of man is capable of. The Philoſophers themſelves became jealous, envious, fickle, raſh, unjuſt, paſſionate, and ſubject to the infirmities of the reſt of Mankind. Then began men only to reaſon with reference to their humours, ambition, and intrigues: and in a ſhort time, there was no foppery nor extravagancy, ſays *Cicero*, which had not ſome Philoſopher

pher for Author and Patron. Men followed no more Reaſon but Paſſion; and made it their buſineſs more to maintain their Opinions with heats, than to defend the Truth with ſincerity. The different intereſts of Sects who at that time laboured to overthrow one another, by the oppoſition that was amongſt their Ring-leaders, did not a little contribute to that diſorder. The ancient School of *Plato* degenerated by the Sentiments of the new, into the Sect of *Scepticks* and *Pyrrhoniſts*, who doubted of every thing. And after the death of *Theophraſtus*, the School of the Peripateticks remitted much of their application to Natural Philoſophy, that they might ſtudy Eloquence. And this was the revolution in Philoſophy, which followed that of *Greece*: for ſince that it loſt its liberty, under the Succeſſors of *Alexander*, there aroſe but a few heads fit for the ſtudy of Nature, under the Reign of the *Ptolomies*, who called the Learned to *Alexandria*, and obliged them to leave *Greece*. Nei-

ther was there almoſt any other Philoſopher of note in any other part of the world, except ſome followers of *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Zeno*, and *Epicurus*, who were in ſome vogue at *Athens*. The Learned that got greateſt name elſewhere, were *Athenodorus* Keeper of the Library of the Kings of *Pergamus*, who corrected the Books of *Zeno*; *Strato* the Preceptor of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*; *Ariſteas* that was ſent by *Ptolomy* the Son of *Lagus* to *Eleazar* High Prieſt of *Jeruſalem*; *Zoilus*, who made himſelf famous by his Criticiſmes on the Poems of *Homer*; *Nicander* the Phyſician of young *Attalus*, whoſe capacity *Quintilian* admires; *Eratoſthenes*, whoſe Fragments are cited by *Plutarch*, *Athenæus*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Clement* of *Alexandria*; *Apollonius* of *Rhodes*, Library-Keeper to *Ptolomy Evergetes*; *Zenodotus* who flouriſhed under *Ptolomy Soter*, and ſome others. The jealouſie it ſelf which aroſe between the Kings of *Alexandria* and *Pergamus*, upon the fanſie they took of raiſing Libraries, ſerved only to diſcredit the Philoſophy of

of *Ariſtotle*; for the fooliſh emulation that theſe Princes had to make great Collections of Books, made them without diſtinction give conſiderable rewards to all who brought them in the Books of *Ariſtotle*, as *Galen* aſſures us; and upon that account, ſuch was the induſtry of Bookſellers, that forty Volumes of Analyticks bearing the name of *Ariſtotle* were collected, though he never compoſed but four: And that confuſion was the cauſe that the interpreters of that Philoſopher were ſo puzled about the true diſtinction of his Books.

IX.

Philoſophy was not known at *Rome*, till Civility had poliſhed it. The three firſt Ages of that ſtate were ſpent in the Conqueſt of *Italy*. Philoſophy was then lookt upon as the Mother of lazineſs, which became odious in a Republick where every one was uſefully employed, as appears in a Fragment of *Pacuvius*. The love of Letters came to *Rome* by the Commerce which they had with the *Grecians*. Then it was

that the *Romans* became the Scholars of thoſe whoſe Maſters they were. For the Study of Philoſophy was revived again even in *Greece*, by the perſecution of one of the *Ptolomy*'s, who baniſhed from *Alexandria* the Philoſophers whom his Predeceſſors had called thither: The greateſt part of whom returned to *Athens*, where the concourſe of the Learned gave new heat to Studies by a flight of Wits that there ſignalized their Capacitie: Amongſt whom the chief were *Panetius* the Tutor of *Lelius* and *Scipio*, *Polybius*, *Carneades*, *Clitomachus*, *Apollonius Molo* Preceptor to *Julius Cæſar* and *Cicero*, who by the noiſe of their fame drew to *Athens* the moſt flouriſhing Youth of *Rome*, for the ſtudy of Philoſophy; and they occaſioned even emulation among the *Romans*, who began to apply themſelves thereto with earneſtneſs. *Lucretius* was the firſt that wrote there of Philoſophy, as he himſelf affirms. *Quintilian* makes mention of one *Varro* of *Gallia Narbonenſis*, that wrote on that ſubject. *Terentius Varro*, whom

whom *Saluſt* calls the learnedeſt of the *Romans*, was a great Philoſopher. *Virgil* was alſo one of the firſt that was delighted with the ſtudy of the works of Nature. But no man in that time expreſt ſo great love for Philoſophy as *Cicero*; for he wrote ſeveral Treatiſes thereon, he explained to *Terentius Varro* the Doctrine of *Plato* and other Philoſophers in his Academicks: he wrote of the Moral Philoſophy of the Stoicks and *Epicureans* to *Brutus*: he made a Diſcourſe to *Hortenſius* to excite him to the love of Philoſophy, whereof St. *Auguſtine* makes mention. He wrote to *Trebatius* the Book of Topicks, which is a kind of Logick. In fine, the troubles of the Republick encreaſing daily, and Tyranny beginning to take rooting there, he retired into the Country, where he applyed himſelf ſo ſtrenuouſly to the ſtudy of Philoſophy, that in the opinion of *Plutarch*, he was prouder of being a Philoſopher, than an Orator. *Brutus* likewiſe in imitation of *Cicero* wrote ſome Treatiſes of Philoſophy, which are loſt:

And

And in this ſtate was Philoſophy at that time in *Rome*.

X.

Furthermore the *Romans*, who made appear great ſolidity of wit in what they undertook, adhered to the Philoſophy of the *Grecians*, and attempted not the invention of any new one; probably alſo, becauſe their genius inclined them to Eloquence. However it be no partiality divided their minds into different Opinions: Gravity, which was the Character of their Nation, allowed not the weakneſſes which ſpring from diſpute and paſſion. Old *Cato* who naturally deſpiſed every thing that was not truly *Roman*, could not endure that they ſhould learn any thing from the *Grecians*: That made him give his vote, that with all poſſible diligence the three *Grecian* Philoſophers, *Carneades*, *Diogenes*, and *Critolaus*, deputed from *Greece* to the Senate, ſhould be ſent back again, for fear that the *Roman* Wits might be infected with their Opinions. And it is to this alſo, that the Oracle in the ſixth

Book

Book of the *Æneides* has a reference; which ſays, that the *Grecians* were to be greater Orators and Philoſophers than the *Romans:*

Orabunt cauſas melius, cæliq; meatus
Deſcribent radio, & ſurgentia ſidera dicent.

As if Philoſophy had not been altogether worthy of the Majeſty of the Empire. This alſo *Horace* inſinuates after his manner, by the biting raillery which he jeers all the Sects with in his Satyrs: And by the Character of *Offellus*, in whom he repreſents the mark of a *Roman* Philoſopher, by praiſing in his perſon that grave, auſtere, and ſolid wiſdom, which was perfected without any dependence on the Rules and Precepts which the *Grecians* ſo much eſteemed.

Offellus abnormis ſapiens craſſaq; minerva.

The *Grecians* were indeed more poliſhed

ed and formal in all their ways of carriage than the *Romans*: but their manners were not altogether ſo pure. This is the Idea that *Quintilian* formed of both. *Cicero* who underſtood the Opinions of all the Philoſophers, addicted not himſelf to any. Young *Cato* was a Stoick meerly by Conſtitution. *Cæſar* was a great Dialectician, eager in the purſuit of the knowledge of Nature, as he is repreſented by *Lucan*; but *Epicurean* as to his Morals, aſwell as *Pomponius Atticus*. *Horace* was one of the Libertines in Philoſophy, who agreed with all Sects, and was of none. That was commonly his Sect which ſuted beſt with his Affairs: For he changed and altered them as men change their humour: And ſo much he profeſſed himſelf.

XI.

That ſmack of Philoſophy, which common ſenſe and ſound judgment that then reigned ſeaſoned *Rome* with, continued ſtill under *Auguſtus*, a Prince of an even and ſolid wit. He had able Maſters, as *Suetonius* ſaith; and by his

his Philoſophy he reigned with tranquillity enough, conſidering the violent Revolution that the Empire ſuffered at that time. There was hatched at *Rome* during his Reign a new Sect of Philoſophers, whereof *Potamon* of *Alexandria* was the Founder. That Philoſopher picked out all that was rational in the Doctrine of the other Philoſophers, that he might compile it into a Syſteme; and therefore he called his Sect, the Sect of *Eclecticks*. It had ſcarcely any followers but amongſt the Chriſtians, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* aſſures us. The Tyranny that under *Tiberius* and his Succeſſors, began to domineer even over the minds and ſentiments of men, changed the countenance of Philoſophy, aſwell as of the Government and Affairs. Moſt part of the perſons of Quality became Stoicks, that they might have a Character of ſtedfaſtneſs againſt the violences of *Tiberius*. So that bad fortune and diſgrace made more Philoſophers, than the School or Cloſet; and men by being unfortunate became wiſe.

Cali-

Caligula, *Nero*, and *Domitian* baniſhed the Philoſophers from *Rome*: and *Nero* by a fantaſtical appetite to Philoſophy, ſent for Magician Philoſophers from *Arabia*, to refine what he had learnt from *Seneca*. *Seneca* himſelf was a better Courtier than Philoſopher; his Morality was ſevere, but his Doctrine not very exact, as *Quintilian* obſerves. The truth is, Philoſophy was in no great eſteem in that time, wherein all things went by favour and complaiſance; mens care was only how to pleaſe and flatter the Emperours, and true merit being ſhut up in ſecret and in ſilence ſtirred not abroad. Philoſophers were not now diſtinguiſhed by Vertue and Doctrine, but by Habit and Grimaces; which were made uſe of to impoſe on the Publick, by diſguiſing their real Conduct. In fine, men became Philoſophers by the Beard, when they left off to be ſo by Manners. As it appears by the accident that ſome time after happened to *Herodes Atticus*; A thing like a man wrapped up in a Cloak, with a long

long Beard, preſented it ſelf to him: What ar't, ſaid he? A Philoſopher, reply'd arrogantly the Fellow. *I ſee*, (ſaid *Herodes*) *the Cloak and Beard of a Philoſopher; but the Philoſopher I ſee not yet.*

XII.

The Study of Philoſophy, which was grown contemptible under the firſt Emperours, through intrigue and policy which the Revolution of the State, and the weakneſs of new Government produced, began to reflouriſh under the Emperour *Adrian*, and his Succeſſors, in ſuch a manner, that theſe Princes themſelves were proud of being Philoſophers; and were pleaſed when they were flattered to be complemented with that new Title. As it happened to *Marcus Aurelius* and *Commodus*, when *Athenagoras* and St. *Juſtin*, who were deputed by the *Grecian* Churches, to inform them of the Chriſtian Religion, made their Harangues to them. *Trajan* who by his wit and inclination was already become favourable to Learning; the Natural Hiſtory

of

of *Pliny*, which was publiſhed in the time of *Veſpaſian*, and the Diſcourſes of *Dion Chryſoſtom*, who compoſed Treatiſes of Moral and Natural Philoſophy, contributed to the reviving of that Spirit; which *Plutarch*, one of the wiſeſt and moſt judicious Philoſophers that ever was, inſpired into the Emperour *Adrian*, whoſe Preceptor he was, as he had before done to *Trajan*; and his Works which were at the ſame time ſo favourably received of the publick, renewed in men a reliſh of Philoſophy: Wherein he was well ſeconded by *Favorinus*, Secretary to the Emperour, who by his Writings gave his Maſter jealouſie; of whom *Diogenes Laertius* ſpeaks ſo often, with an honourable Character. That love of Philoſophy which *Adrian* re-eſtabliſhed at *Alexandria*, by the Learned whom he ſent thither, continued under his Succeſſors, by the cares of *Epictetus*; who having withdrawn from *Rome*, for the horrour which he conceived of *Domitian*'s Reign, returned again in the time of *Antonine*, to whom he was Preceptor;

ceptor; by the Writings of *Arrianus* his Scholar, Preceptor to *Antoninus Pius*; by the Works of *Galen*, Phyſician to the Emperours, and the fineſt Wit of thoſe times; by thoſe of *Diogenes Laertius*, *Herodes Atticus* the Diſciple of *Favorinus*, *Pauſanias*, *Aulus Gellius*, *Ptolomy* that famous Aſtronomer, *Maximus* of *Tyre*, one of the Preceptors of *Marcus Aurelius*, and of many other Learned men that followed them; as of *Taurus* of *Berytus*, *Athenæus*, *Alexander Aphrodiſeus*, *Philoſtratus*, *Plotinus*, *Apuleius* and *Porphyrius*; who being encouraged by the Example of Emperours, in theſe and the following Ages, revived the love of Philoſophy by their learned Works. In fine, it ſeems that the ſtudy of Truth began to be more valuable in a time, when the Oracles themſelves began to lye. And Philoſophy was ſo much in faſhion in the time of *Lucian*, that he undertook in ſeveral parts of his Works to render Philoſophers ridiculous, and chiefly in the Dialogues of the Battel of the *Lapithes*, the *Sycophant* ——,

Icaromenippus, the *Cynick* and *Fugitives*; the nipping Jeſts that he puts upon them on all occaſions in imitation of *Cratinus* and *Ariſtophanes*, who play upon *Pythagoras* and *Socrates*, do ſufficiently evidence, that the opinion wherein they were held at that time, gave ground to raillery. The truth is, there was ſo counterfeit an outſide in that Profeſſion, and the name of *Philoſopher* was ſo horribly abuſed, that that Author who ſet up for the publick Cenſurer of the Manners of his time, had reaſon to make it one of the principal ſubjects of his Satyr.

XIII.

But that Divine Philoſophy which deſcended from Heaven, by the birth of JESUS CHRIST, being ſpread abroad in the world by the Doctrine and exemplary life of Chriſtians, Pagan Philoſophy began to appear to men very frivolous; eſpecially when they came to underſtand what was that Supreme Good, about which men had for ſo many Ages diſputed in vain: and after that all-cœleſtial Mora-

lity

lity of the Goſpel, wherein all the Wiſdom of God appeared to be compriſed, had been publiſhed in the world, it filled the minds of the Pagans with jealouſie. For S. *Paul* having been deſirous to ſpeak before the *Areopage* of the Immortality of the Soul, and the reſurrection of the Body, as of an indubitable truth, he was treated there with ſcorn and contempt, by the Philoſophers who were then at *Athens*, who endeavoured to make him paſs for a Babler. The ſpirit of Vanity and Pride, which reigned moſt in the Heathen Philoſophy, obliged that Apoſtle to diſcredit it, by the advice he gave the *Coloſſians*, to take heed leſt they ſhould be miſled by the vain reaſonings of Philoſophers. Emulation encreaſed ſtill more in ſucceeding times: For S. *Auſtin*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, and *Euſebius* employed all the force of their Eloquence, and all the ardour of their Zeal, to decry the fooliſh wiſdom of Paganiſm: As the Heathens on the other hand began to declaim againſt our Religion, whereof

Lucian had the impudence to call the Author a Sophiſt, and Chriſtians ignorant People; and *Octavian* in *Minutius Felix* reproached them for being wholly deſtitute of Learning. S. *Auguſtine* in one of his Works refutes theſe Calumnies with all the vehemence he could. But becauſe at that time the Miracles wrought by Chriſtians did much authoriſe their Doctrine, the Pagans had their recourſe to Magick and Enchantments, to keep up their credit by ſuch wicked Practices, when the uſual ways failed them. That abominable fancy to Magick, had before that its beginning in thoſe who made profeſſion of Philoſophy, under the firſt Emperours, by means of *Anaxilaus* and *Nigidius Figulus*, both *Pythagoreans*, whom *Auguſtus* baniſhed, and of the Magician Philoſophers whom *Nero* ſent for from *Arabia*. It redoubled under *Domitian* by the impoſtures of *Apollonius Thyanæus*, of whom *Hierocles* compoſed a Book, comparing his Miracles to the Miracles of JESUS CHRIST; and whoſe Life

Life *Philoſtratus* wrote on the ſame deſign; as *Eunapius* wrote the Lives of the Sophiſts, who were almoſt all Magicians, that he might oppoſe them to the life of Chriſtians; becauſe they gained the admiration of people, by their Vertue and Miracles which they wrought. The fancy to ſo deteſtable a Philoſophy was encreaſed by the Doctrine of *Pythagoras*, which was at that time in faſhion, and whereof the followers became Necromancers, as appears by the reproach that *Lucian* caſts on them in one of his Dialogues. But nothing gave ſo great a current to ſo idle a Philoſophy, as the freakiſhneſs of the Emperour *Julian*, who giving his mind to all the horrid abſurdities which the extravagance of his curioſity ſuggeſted to him, made an execrable mixture of what was holy in our Religion with the impieties of Paganiſm, that he might ſhape to himſelf an abominable Philoſophy. And moſt part of the Philoſophers of that time were Magicians, to pleaſe the Emperour: Which appeared ſince in *Apu-*

leius a *Platonick* Philoſopher, who being accuſed of Magick by the Magiſtrates, defended himſelf no otherwiſe, than by a pretended connexion, which he alledged, of Philoſophy with natural Magick. That abomination, which continued in the ſtudy of Philoſophy until the time of *Boetius*, and whereof he purges himſelf, gave ground to the firſt beginnings of Cabaliſtick Philoſophy and Chymiſtry, as *Delrio* aſſures us.

XIV.

By how much the Heathen Philoſophy fell into extravagancy, by all theſe exceſſes; ſo much that of Chriſtians continued to advance to perfection in the ſearch of Truth, aſwell by the purity of its Doctrine, as the integrity of their Manners. It is reported, that *Solon* travelling in *Egypt* found there a Philoſopher of the Country, who told him with a certain air of Authority, *The Grecians*, Solon, *are but Children.* Which happened to be but too true, in regard of the Heathens, when Chriſtian Philoſophy began to ſpread abroad its

its light into the world: becauſe humane Reaſon appeared in all its weakneſs, before the beams of that divine brightneſs of Faith. But they who brought Philoſophy in greateſt vogue among the Chriſtians, whether by their works, or the publick profeſſion they made thereof, were *Ariſtides*, one of the moſt learned of thoſe that flouriſhed at *Alexandria* under the Emperour *Adrian*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Athenagoras*, *Bardeſanes*, *Athenogenes*, *Apollinaris* Biſhop of *Hieropolis*, *Melito* Biſhop of *Sardis*, S. *Irenæus* whom *Tertullian* calls a man verſed in all Sciences; *Tertullian* himſelf, who was obliged to ſtudy Philoſophy to defend Religion, which in the minds of the Pagans paſſed for a Sect of Philoſophy; *Panthenus*, who explained the Catechiſm to Chriſtians in the School of *Alexandria*; *Clement* his Scholar, who having, through *Greece* and *Egypt*, in vain ſought the wiſdom of this world, learnt the wiſdom of Heaven, in the School of bleſſed *Panthenus*; to whoſe place he ſucceeded in that fa-

mous Chair of the Christian Schools; *Origen*, who succeeded to *Clement*, and who, that he might refute the Philosopher *Celsus*, learned all the Opinions that were taught at that time; *Lactantius*, who was ignorant of nothing of all the Sects of Philosophers; *Arnobius*, who with so great judgment wrote against the Gentiles; S. *Gregory Nazianzen*, of whom *Eusebius* speaks with so many Elogies; *Ammonius*, who was esteemed by the Pagan Philosophers, and who was the first that taught Christians the Philosophy of *Aristotle*. To these great men, may be added S. *Basil*, who was the greatest Dialectician of his time, in the opinion of *Gregory Thaumaturgus*; S. *Chrysostom*, who became as great a Philosopher as he was an Orator; S. *Augustine*, who, besides the three Books he wrote against the *Platonicks*, made a Treatise of Dialectick, which is to be found in the first Volume of his Works. I could name a great many more, who adorned that time with the lustre of their knowledge, authorising the Religion which

which they preached by the purity of their lives; and making the dryeſt Thorns of Philoſophy fructifie by the ſacred ſtreams of their Doctrine.

XV.

From this Sun-ſhine of Philoſophy which at that time appeared, by the emulation of the Chriſtians and Pagans, men fell ſince into a groſs air of barbarity and ignorance, which cannot be ſufficiently lamented. It was in thoſe wretched times, when the *Huns*, *Vandals*, *Goths*, and *Longobards* broke in upon *Italy*. That diſorder began by the burning of the Bibliotheck of the Emperours, which happened at *Conſtantinople*, under the Empire of *Zeno*; wherein Philoſophy and the other Sciences were much concerned, by the loſs of more than ſixſcore thouſand Volumes. The *Arabians* having rendred themſelves Maſters of the world, by their Conqueſts in the following Ages, made a kind of revolution in Learning aſwell as in the Empire. The nature of their genius, which was ſubtil, plodding, and profound,

and

and tied them too literally to the Text of *Ariſtotle*, made them follow a kind of abſtract reaſoning, which did ſomewhat deviate from the ſolidity of the *Greeks* and *Latines*; and though there appeared much ſubtilty in that way, yet it muſt be acknowledged, that that new ſtrain of Reaſon ſeemed falſe, by the miſtakes whereinto *Avicenna*, *Alkindus*, *Algazel*, *Averroes*, *Alpharabius*, *Albohaſen*, and ſome others fell, of whom *Poſſevin* in the third Book of his Bibliotheck relates the Errours to an enormous number. *Ludovicus Vives* ſpeaking of the Metaphyſicks of *Avicenna*, and the Philoſophy of *Averroes*, pretends that both look like the raveries of a wandring imagination, and the Viſions of the Alcoran. And *Thomas Aquinas* in one of his *Opuſcles* ſays, that *Averroes* was not ſo much a follower of *Ariſtotle*, which he profeſſes, as a corrupter of his Doctrine. But beſides that, under the *Arabians* Philoſophy became nice and full of quirks, by theſe preciſions and abſtracted Notions which it introduced into

into the Schools: It became alſo wholly barbarous in its expreſſions; Reaſon, if I may ſo ſay, having unlearned to ſhew it ſelf under rational terms. It muſt be granted however, that the *Arabians*, by the quality of their genius, and through the leiſure which the proſperity of their Arms and Plenty afforded them, did ſo apply themſelves to the ſtudy of the Mathematicks and Philoſophy, that they became in that time the learnedeſt men in the world. And *Averroes* by the depth of his plodding genius, and the ſtudy of *Ariſtotle*, deſerved to be called his Commentator, and founded a Sect of Philoſophers under his own name; who oppoſed themſelves to *Aphrodiſeus*, *Philoponus*, and the reſt of the *Grecians*. Nevertheleſs as *Averroes* underſtood not *Ariſtotle* but by a Tranſlation not very exact, he fell himſelf into ſo horrible perverſions of his ſenſe, that *Bagolinus* a Philoſopher of *Verona*, *Zimara*, and *Mantinus* in vain aſſayed to correct him. For *Vives* ſayes, that he read only a baſe Latin Tranſlation of the

the Text of *Ariſtotle*, whereof he made another into *Arabick* ſtill worſe. The truth is, that beſides the unfaithful Copies, which the *Arabians* had of *Ariſtotle*'s Text, as *Vives* and *Poſſevin* aſſures us; it is thought, that the *Genius* of the *Arabian* Language is ſo different from the *Greek* Tongue, that the one can hardly exhauſt the ſenſe of the other, to make a Faithful Tranſlation: for with ſome proportion it may be ſaid of all the reſt of the *Arabians*, what *Cælius Rhodiginus* ſayes of *Avicenna*, *Avicenna linguæ græcæ ignarus cum libros Ariſtotelis mutilos perverſoſq; legeret, autorem eminentiſſimum minus conſequi potuit.* *Picus Mirandula* ſayes, that *Averroes* ſtuck to the ſtudy of *Ariſtotle*, and *Avicenna* to *Plato*, which occaſioned the Oppoſition of Opinions that are to be found betwixt them. After all, they were both great Men, and of extraordinary eſteem amongſt the Learned.

XVI.

The School-men, who all addicted themſelves to the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle*, and

and formed their minds by the ſtudy of the *Arabians*, from whom they took that ſubtile and nice Spirit, which ſince ſlipt into the Schools, made the laſt Sect of Philoſophers, which hath been in any reputation. *Thomas Aquinas* is pretended to have been the founder of that Sect, for having read *Ariſtotle* in a Tranſlation of *Averroes* made by a *Spaniard*, he took from it the Method, which *Lanfranc* Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, *Gilbert Porretain* Biſhop of *Poictiers*, *Abelard*, and *Peter Lombard*, had already roughhewn upon the Idea that *Damaſcenus* had framed thereof: and whereof *Peter Comeſtor* compoſed the firſt Elements, for they were great Dialecticians. *Danæus* in his *Prolegomena* upon the firſt of the Sentences, hath written the beginnings of the Scholaſtick Philoſophy, which may be ſaid to have had three different periods, as is reported of the School of *Plato*; the ancient, the middle and the new Scholaſtick. The firſt, which had it's beginning under the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*,

terbury, or to ſay better, under *Peter Lombard*, laſted almoſt two hundred years, and ended under *Albertus Magnus*. *Lombard* ſoiled much the purity of Theology, by many unprofitable queſtions, wherewith he perplexed it. *Alexander Aleſius* was the moſt conſiderable of theſe firſt School-men. The ſecond began with *Albertus Magnus*, Biſhop of *Ratiſbonne*, the vaſteſt *Genius* of theſe Ages, in the Judgment of *Trithemus*, and continued until *Durandus*: and during that ſpace of about an hundred years, the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle* was raiſed to the higheſt pitch of its reputation, by the vogue that *Thomas Aquinas* and *John Duns* a Scotiſh-man gave it. Theſe were the two Spirits of greateſt capacity for Philoſophy in theſe laſt Ages. No Man ever reaſonned with more juſtneſs and exactneſs than *Thomas Aquinas*: Solidity was his chief character, as ſubtility that of *Scotus*. They both made themſelves ſo famous by their learning, that they became the heads of two the moſt celebrated Sects that ever were;

and

and had it not been for the miſery of their times, wherein barbarity reigned, they would have been comparable to the greateſt Philoſophers of Antiquity. The third Age of School-Philoſophy began with *Durandus*, who to get reputation, did riſe againſt *Thomas Aquinas*, but with little ſucceſs, and laſted till *Gabriel Biel* a *German*, the compiler of other Philoſophers, who expreſſed ill, what he conceived indifferently well; for there is a dulneſs in his expreſſion, that renders him dry and harſh. Then did the Wits ſubtilize more and more by an emulation of being Nominaliſts or Realiſts. *Ocham* was the chief of the Nominaliſts, who taught that Beings Univerſal were but words, and *Scotus* leader of the Realiſts, who taught that the ſame Univerſal beings were real things. And as that age was infected with that naughty air which corrupted the Schools; ſo the animoſity of theſe two Sects hurried mens minds into ſuch extremities, as cannot be paralell'd in antiquity; for in *Germany* they waged

ſuch

ſuch War together, as broke ſometimes out into extravagancy and rage. It was no more diſputing in the Univerſities, but downright fighting, and opinions were only defended by violence. Then it was that Philoſophy was wholly taken up about the operations of the mind, conceptions, and preciſions: the wits drained their reaſons with frivolous queſtions: Men fell into heats for bare and pure formalities, raiſed to themſelves Phantaſms, and Diſputations; Reaſon became litigious and trickiſh to maintain it ſelf, and truth was almoſt nothing elſe but the price of the diſpute. This was called Wit, but was it ſo? In this method were compoſed heaps of idle Books and Opinions, which ſtifled all that remained of a good reliſh for Letters. Nevertheleſs, that Scholaſtick Air, how dry ſoever it was, appeared moſt ſolid and proper to overthrow fulſhood: error and impoſture could not endure its ſplendour; and the ſharpneſs, animoſitie, and paſſion, which was then to be found in diſputes,

was

was not ſo much the fault of the Schools, as of thoſe that abuſed them.

XVII.

There were notwithſtanding in theſe Ages three Philoſophers, who by a ſpirit of novelty took their flight out of the Schools, and deviſed a method quite different from what was in uſe: theſe were *Reymund Lully*, *Cardan*, and *Paracelſus*, who with very different Notions were all three of a Character not much different. *Reymund Lully* by the commerce which he entertained with the *Arabians*, became very skilful in Medicine, Natural Philoſophy and Aſtronomy: And of theſe three Sciences he made a fourth, the Art of Chymiſtry, whereof in *Spain* and *Italy* he was the Reſtorer. He endeavoured to overturn the order eſtabliſhed in the Schools, by reducing Philoſophy and other Sciences to a method, that has nothing of ſolidity, and which is ſo far from making men learned, that it could never make one reaſonable. *Cardan* is a vaſt and irregular head that offers at all without diſtinction; and

fixes on nothing: What he ſays himſelf of his familiar ſpirit, which he believes to be made up of *Saturn* and *Mercury* is ſo fooliſh, that one cannot read him in cold blood without laughter: And what he adds elſewhere, that that ſpirit did not communicate it ſelf to him but in dreams, is ſtill more extravagant. It is he who hath in theſe laſt Ages revived all that ſecret Philoſophy of the Cabal and Cabaliſts, which fills the world with ſpirits, to which he pretends that men may become like, purifying themſelves by Philoſophy. But *Paracelſus* who had the air more of an Operator than Philoſopher, is the moſt extravagant of all: For he fancied to himſelf to make a new Philoſophy, a new art of Medicine, and a new Religion; of his own head making himſelf, by a ridiculous neutrality, the Mediator between the Pope and *Luther*, that he might bring them both to his Maxims. *Gohory* was his firſt Follower in *France*, a very ſuperficial Naturaliſt, but a great Diſtiller. *Paracelſus* had a deep wit, a dull and

and obſcure expreſſion; all his words were Riddles, and his diſcourſes Myſteries. *Rullandus* a *German* Phyſician made a Dictionary of his terms, with which one cannot yet underſtand him. *Paracelſus* re-eſtabliſhed Chymiſtry in *Germany*: The Emperour *Charles* the Fifth heard him; but upon the propoſition that he made to enrich him by Chymiſtry, called him an Enthuſiaſt. To theſe three Philoſophers may be added *Cornelius Agrippa*, *Arnoldus de villa nova*, *Peter* of *Apono*, *Bacon*, and ſome other Cabaliſts, of whom *Agrippa* himſelf ſpeaks in his Epiſtle to the Abbot *Trithemius*. But all that Philoſophy can ſerve for no other end, but to lead men into extravagancy and illuſion; becauſe it ſeems to diſguiſe under the veil of Natural Knowledge, what is moſt black and horrid in Magick. About that time *Reuchlin* endeavoured to revive in *Germany* the Philoſophy of *Pythagoras*, as *Marcilius Ficinus* had in *Italy* re-eſtabliſhed the Doctrine of *Plato*. Theſe were the Diſtempers of thoſe Ages: Of

which the different tasts for Philosophy, the diversity of sentiments, and the instability of spirits that is to be seen at that time, shews sufficiently the weakness.

XVIII.

In fine, seeing the love of Learning, and especially of Philosophy, became confined to *Europe*, the different Nations thereof applyed themselves variously to it, according to the diversity of their genius's and inclinations. The *Spaniards* according to the Character of their Wits, cut out for Dialectick and Reflexions, became subtle in their Reasonings, Formalists and Metaphysicians. The *Italians* took a more agreeable air, they grew for most part curious in lovely Ideas; the Works of *Triphus* one of the learned of the last Ages, inspired into them love for the Philosophy of *Aristotle*; and the Books of Cardinal *Bessarion* and *Marcilius Ficinus* gave them an inclination for the Philosophy of *Plato*, to which they accommodated themselves better than other Nations, by the quality of their fine

fine genius, naturally quick but lazie. The *French*, who found themſelves capable of all Sciences, embraced all; and by that Character of Capacity and Curioſity, copied what they found good amongſt other Nations, and ſucceeded in every thing. The *Engliſh*, by that depth of Wit which is common to their Nation, loved the Methods that were profound, abſtruſe, and far-ſought; and by a head-ſtrong application to labour, ſet themſelves to the obſervation of Nature more than other Nations: as appears by the Works which they have publiſhed. The *Germans*, by the neceſſity which the Climat impoſed upon them to keep themſelves by the fire, and by the conveniency of their Stoves, addicted themſelves to Chymiſtry; as did other Northern people: So that the Southern Countries contributed to make Philoſophy profound and ſubtle, and the Northern to render it laborious and mechanical. And of all the modern Philoſophers, thoſe that have made greateſt noiſe, are *Galilæus* an *Italian*,

Bacon, *Hobbes*, and *Boile* Engliſh, *Gaſſendus* and *Deſcartes* French, and *Vanhelmont* Dutch-man. *Galileus* ſeems to be the moſt ingenious of all; and he I think may be called the Father of Modern Philoſophy. His Method reſembles much that of the *Platoniſts*, his Stile is pleaſant; and by his manner of Writing he conceals many defects: though he hath copied many things from the Primitive Philoſophers, yet all ſeems to be his own, and he is taken for the original in ſeveral places, where he is but the tranſcriber. *Bacon* has a ranging wit which dives not deep into any thing; his too great reach hinders him from being exact, the moſt part of his ſentiments are rather Overtures for meditation, than Maxims to be followed: His Opinions are ſomewhat ſubtile and ſparkling; and if they be rightly conſidered, they reſemble more ſparks of fire, than an entire and natural light. *Hobbes* is obſcure without delight, ſingular in his Notions, learned, but not very ſolid, and inconſtant in his Doctrine; for he

he is ſometimes *Epicurean*, ſometimes Peripatetick. *Boile* is exact in his Obſervations; no man in *Europe* hath enriched Philoſophy with ſo many Experiments as he; he reaſons upon his Experiments with indifferent good conſequence, which after all are not always unqueſtionable; becauſe his principles are not always certain: he is in a word, an able Philoſopher and great Naturaliſt. *Gaſſendus*, who deſired only to paſs for the Reſtorer of the Philoſophy of *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, ſpeaks little of his own head; there is nothing almoſt in him but the beauty of ſtile, that may give him the credit of an admirable Author: To refute his Natural Philoſophy there needs no more but the Arguments of *Ariſtotle* againſt *Democritus* and his Diſciples. *Deſcartes* is one of the moſt extraordinary genius's that hath appeared in theſe laſt times; one of a fertile wit and profound meditation: the concatenation of his Doctrine reaches his point, the order of it is well deviſed according to his principles; and his

Syſteme, though made up of the ancient and modern, is well digeſted. The truth is, he teaches men too much to doubt, and that is no good model for ſpirits naturally incredulous: but in fine, he is more original than others. *Vanhelmont*, through the knowledge which he had of Nature after his way, performed ſuch prodigious things by his Remedies, that he was put into the Inquiſition, upon ſuſpicion that what he did was above the power of Nature. In a word, *Galileus* is the moſt agreeable of the Moderns, *Bacon* the moſt ſubtle, *Gaſſendus* the moſt learned, *Hobbes* the moſt plodding and thoughtful, *Boile* the moſt curious, *Deſcartes* the moſt ingenious, and *Vanhelmont* the greateſt Naturaliſt, but too much wedded to *Paracelſus*. The moſt univerſal method of his Philoſophy, is the ſympathy and antipathy of Simples and mixt Bodies, which he weſl underſtood.

XIX.

Upon the retail of all theſe notions of Ancient and Modern Philoſophy, and upon

upon the different character of both, this comparifou may be made. The Ancient Philoſophy is more founded on authority, and the Modern on experience; the Ancient is ſimple and natural, the Modern artificial and elaborate; the former is more modeſt and grave, the latter more imperious and pedantick. The ancient is peaceable and calm; for it was ſo far from diſputing, that it would have the minds of Youth prepared by the Mathematicks, that they might be accuſtomed to ſubmit to demonſtration without heſitation: the modern is of a ſtrain of diſputing of every thing, and of training up Youth to noiſe and the tumult of the School. The Ancient inquires only into truth out of a ſincere deſire to find it: the Modern takes pleaſure to diſpute it, even when it is diſcovered. The one advances more ſecurely in its method, becauſe it hath alwayes the Metaphyſicks for a guide: the other is unſure in its ſteps when it is once deprived of that conduct. Conſtancy, Fidelity, ſound Judgment, and

Stedfaſtneſs

Stedfaſtneſs, was that which men called Philoſophy in the dayes of *Plato*. And the diſlike of buſineſs, peeviſhneſs, the renouncing of pleaſures when the uſe of them is loſt through the extinction of paſſions, I know not what Authority that is derived from the Gray-beard, counterfeit audacity, phlegmatick ſullenneſs, moderation, and all that Wiſdom which ſprings from the weakneſs of Age and Conſtitution, is the Philoſophy of a great many now-a-dayes. The Ancient is univerſally more learned, it aims at all: and the Modern confines it ſelf to the ſole conſideration of nature, reſting ſatisfied to be a mere Naturaliſt. In fine, the Ancient is more addicted to ſtudy, more laborious and indefatigable in what it undertakes; for the Primitive Philoſophers ſpent their lives in ſtudy: the Modern is leſs conſtant in its application, more ſuperficial in its pains, and more precipitate in its ſtudies. And this precipitation accuſtomes it by little and little to ground too eaſily, reaſonings not very exact, upon uncertain rumours

rumours, teſtimonies of little credit, and upon experiments not well agreed upon. It pronounces boldly upon doubts and uncertainties, to ſatisfie in ſome manner the eagerneſs that it ſometimes hath to vent its imaginations, and to give vogue to novelties: ſo that to make a deciſion between both, I am of the Opinion of that intelligent Philoſopher of theſe laſt Ages, who all things being well conſidered was of the mind to ſtick to the Ancients, and leave the Moderns to themſelves: for the plain common ſenſe of the Primitive Philoſophers, is preferable to all the art and quaintneſs of the new. But let us conclude without prejudice, that as from what Cloud ſoever the day breaks out, it ſhould be accounted pleaſant; ſo from what part ſoever truth comes, it ought to be eſteemed. Let us no more diſtinguiſh ancient reaſon from new, becauſe on what ſide ſoever we behold it, and what colour ſoever we give it, it is alwayes the ſame. And let us make this reflexion, that if there be ſome Opinions better received

by

by the publick than others, it is but ſometimes becauſe their Cabals have been more powerful, or their Stars more favourable.

XX.

There are therefore two extremities to be avoided, in the courſe that is to to be held between the Ancient and Modern Philoſophers. The firſt is of thoſe who out of a good Opinion which they have of themſelves, find nothing comparable to their own Age: the Zeal which they have to free themſelves from the Tyranny, which the Authority of the Ancients have uſurped over mens minds, is a falſe Zeal: that is the way to impoſe new Laws on Reaſon, under pretext of giving it liberty. And all theſe fair precepts which men give us to ſhake off the prejudices of Education, Cuſtome, Authority, and to cure our ſelves of popular anticipations, are but Snares laid for our credulity: they ſpeak to us only of liberty, to impoſe upon us a new Yoke. It is only to give to the Moderns, what Men would take from

from the Ancients; and to deſtroy the credit of *Ariſtotle* to ſet up the reputation of *Deſcartes*: but is it juſt to deſpiſe thoſe whom all antiquity have reſpected? Tradition alone and the Univerſal Conſent of all people, might oblige us to do Juſtice to thoſe great Men, who have been the Founders of Sciences; for the World is a great Aſſembly, wherein every Age has its Vote; and to know who is preferable in the Judgment we paſs on men, we muſt look on thoſe who have deſerved from the Publick the moſt Uniververſal Approbation. None but ſuperficial minds can be pleaſed with Novelties. He that is ſolidly wiſe, is not ſurpriſed at the luſtre of Noveltie; he adheres only to what is eſtabliſhed by the ſuffrage of the Ancients, as the Prophet hath it. Is it poſſible that ſo many Ages, ſo many Great-Wits, ſo much Application, and ſo many Works, have been able to produce nothing that is tolerable, ſaith *Cicero*? So that if we compare our ſelves with the great men of the firſt Ages, let us

not

not decide raſhly in our own favours; we are partial Judges, it is the part of poſterity to give their verdict thereof. Let us but caſt our eyes on the ages paſt, and that will teach us modeſty. Theſe great Men, beſides the extraordinary *genius* they had for Sciences, ſpent their lives in continual pains, with a docility of Spirit without example. *Pythagoras* was a Schollar fifty years under the greateſt Maſters of the world. *Euſebius* ſayes that *Democritus* ſtudied fourſcore years. *Parmenides* hid himſelf eighteen years in a Cave, there to meditate on Logick. *Plato* was the Diſciple of *Socrates*, *Archytas* and *Eurytus*, above forty years. *Ariſtotle* ſtudied under *Plato* more than twenty years. And ſhall we, forſooth, after two years ſlight ſtudy, under very ordinary Maſters, pretend to compare with theſe great men!

XXI.

The other extremity to be avoided is the pertinacious adhering to the Antients ſometimes without Reaſon: Men make an Idol of their Authority by a blind

blind prejudicated perſwaſion of their merit. Such was the head-ſtrongneſs of *George* of *Trabiſond*, who made a Book to prove the conformity of *Ariſtotle* with the holy Scriptures: and of *Marcilius Ficinus* who pretends that *Plato* knew the myſtery of the Trinity. For which *Medina* a *Spaniſh* Divine condemns him of boldneſs injurious to the purity of our Religion, which contains nothing but what is ſupernatural. *Hermolaus Barbarus* was yet more whimſical in his cleaving to the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle*: that learned man by an horrible Cataſtrophe of his Wits raiſed the Devil, that he might learn the true ſenſe of *Ariſtotle*, about a Term which that Philoſopher uſed, and whereof the ſignification ſeemed to him ambiguous. But the moſt fantaſtical of all, was the Emperour *Julian*; who, as *Ammianus Marcellinus* ſaith, debaſed the Grandeur of his Vertues, by playing the Philoſopher: he was chaſte, ſober, juſt and vigilant; but by a ridiculous devotion to the Authority of the Ancient Philoſophers

phers, he preferred the Doctrine of *Plato* to that which St. *Paul* taught the *Athenians*; and by a fearful rambling, he gave himself over to all the curiosities of an unsettled mind. The haughty wisdom of Paganism hindred him from submitting his reason to the wise follie of the Mistery of the Cross, which appeared to be beneath that Philosophy wherein he gloried: and because he made that Philosophy his Religion, so soon as he was Master of his Opinions, by becoming Master of the World, he renounced the Doctrine of JESUS CHRIST, that he might embrace that of *Pythagoras* and *Socrates*, whereby he laboured to gain an extravagant reputation among the Philosophers of his time; and by an abominable vanity, would acknowledge no Gods, but such as owed their Divinity to his grant: so much was his mind debauched by his stubborn adherence to the Ancients. There is therefore a mean to be observed between the Ancients and Moderns; these are to be respected without vilifying of those.

So

So let us endeavour to diſcover new Truths, and not neglect the Ancient. Let us not overthrow things eſtabliſhed, to eſtabliſh things that are uncertain: let us preſerve our liberty, and let us not loſe the uſe of our reaſon, by a blind adoration of the ſentiments either of the Ancients or Moderns: let us do Juſtice to both; and let us value merit wherever it be, without minding whether it be old or new.

XXII.

But though a man may have his mind ſufficiently armed againſt the prejudices which ariſe from the Authority of the Ancients, and the inclination which he may have to the Modern, yet hath he hardly ever the power to ſtrip himſelf wholly of the natural love which he hath for his own opinions. That is one of the great infirmities of the mind of man; becauſe ſelf-love believes nothing to be ſo much its own as its Opinion: men look upon that as a Creature of their own, and renounce all other intereſts to maintain this. Men are even ſome-

times ſo opinionative and obſtinate in defending their own conceits, that they run upon ſtrange extremities. The Diſciples of *Plato* gave themſelves to be burnt for the Doctrine of their Maſter; and the Followers of *Hegeſias* ſuffered themſelves to dye of hunger, by ſticking too cloſely to the Maxims of their School. *Socrates*, for all his wiſdom, in cold blood gave his life to preſerve his Opinion. And even in theſe laſt Ages there have been men ſo fooliſh, as to become the Martyrs of their Doctrine: For Errour hath its Votaries, ſtricter than thoſe that Truth it ſelf hath. Men have even ſometimes a ſecret vanity to authoriſe by their ſuffrage, what is not warranted by Reaſon; and blindly embrace Principles which they underſtand not, and whereof they are only fond, becauſe they are hard to be underſtood. Theſe are the moſt common illuſions of ſelf-love, which how ridiculous ſoever it be in its other paſſions, yet is never ſo much, as in its obſtinacy to maintain its Notions. And as nothing is more unreaſonable

unreaſonable than what it wills; ſo nothing is leſs maintainable than what it thinks. But the worſt of extravagancies is, to be obdured againſt the torrent of publickly-received Opinions; and to admit of no other ſentiments upon the ſubjects that are in hand, but a mans own private opinion: ſuch men take pity to ſee others contrary to themſelves in judgment, becauſe they abound ſo much in their own ſenſe, that they acknowledge no other: this is the Character of ſtinted minds. For in fine, the more merit there is ſtedfaſtly to maintain true Reaſon, when once it is known; the more there is of Vertue to forſake the wrong, when men are perſwaded of its falſhood. That is a magnanimous ingenuity, ſaith *Ariſtotle*: And it is a greatneſs of Soul to retain its full liberty, by maintaining of truth and renouncing falſhood, according to the different views that one hath of both. Thus did *Hippocrates* acknowledge that he had been by falſe Principles ſometime miſtaken in his Reaſonings. So great

modeſty could not proceed but from a great capacity: and it is always a mark of judgment, to doubt of its own ſufficiency.

XXIII.

It is great knowledge to judge of things, according to the different degrees of certainty that they may have, to clear the truth of appearances; to take that for Opinion, which is only but Opinion, and ſo to diſtinguiſh Judgments as one may give ſound Judgment of every thing. For the diſorders which ſlip into the mind, by the various ſentiments that paſs in publick, ſpring from this confuſion of diſcerning. For example, *Copernicus* ſhuts himſelf up in his Cloſet, that he may frame a new Syſteme of the World: he revives the Opinion of that *Nicetas* of *Syracuſa*, who taught that there was nothing in nature at reſt, but the Sun. He beats his brains to frame a new Opinion according to his fancy, and there is nothing better deviſed than that Hypotheſis: however, would it be reaſonable to make the Opinion

pinion of that great man paſs for a demonſtration? and without conſulting the Univerſal conſent of ſo many Ages, who have gone before us, and who are of a contrary Opinion. Would it be juſt to oblige all the World to be governed according to the imagination of *Copernicus*, and to make a private mans ſentiment a Law to all the reſt of mankind? *Deſcartes* erects a new natural Philoſophy, upon principles that are not altogether new. He calls his own Syſteme himſelf a Chimera; for in that manner he diſcourſed with his confidents, naming his Philoſophy a *Romance*: and men would have me eſpouſe the Opinions, that he laughs at; is that reaſonable? I confeſs, I admire his Ideas, but am not ſo ſubmiſſive as to think them unqueſtionable: and ſo I return to my principle, which ought to be the rule of all the reaſonings in Philoſophy, that one muſt be frugal of his belief, that he may employ it, according to the different degrees of certainty which he finds in the matters he examines; to the end that he may take nothing for a truth but what is true,

and think that only probable which is probable. In that consists all the prudence of the Wise-man, saith *Epicurus* in *Cicero*: and it is a bad Character to act in an other manner; for things are often otherwayes than they appear, by the Opinion and Notion that men frame of them.

XXIV.

They are but false measures and deceitful notices, that make men deviate from the common ways of Philosophy, to search out extraordinary paths: and it is always a sign of a depraved taste in Sciences not to love what is commonly received by all the World: one is subject to wander, when he follows by-ways. It is even convenient in the conduct of life, to adhere only to common Opinions: otherways a man exposes himself to great absurdities. *Alexander* for all his valour, having failed in this principle, became worthy of contempt: He wept, says *Plutarch*, because following the Opinion of *Democritus*, who made many Worlds, he had not as yet conquered the half of one;

one. That greatneſs of ſoul which he makes appear by ſo noble a ſentiment becomes ridiculous, ſaith *Elianus*; for it is grounded on a falſe Foundation. So would a Magiſtrate, whoſe Life ought to ſerve as a Model in a well-ordered State, be of little Judgment in the mind of *Cicero*, if in his conduct he followed the Opinion of *Epicurus*: and if inſtead of being ſevere, he made appear eaſineſs in his ſentiments; for all the Counſels of a publick perſon ought to be auſtere, to hold every one to his duty. To what purpoſe is it to preſcribe rules to others to live in order, if he himſelf be irregular? *If we did follow*, ſayes that Orator, *in our Orations theſe ſingular Opinions of the* Stoicks, *who eye Glory and Ignominy after another manner than other people doe; becauſe they are not affected with either of the two: and if we would propoſe to the publick the opinion which the* Porch *teacheth of Vertue and Vice, Good and Evil, no body would liſten to us.* And there is nothing more abſurd, than the way that *Cicero* brings in *Tor-*

quatus ſpeaking in the Senate, upon the principles of *Epicurus*, whoſe Doctrine he followed. There is in that diſcourſe ſome quaint and delicate touches of Raillery: that Orator ſeems delighted to declame againſt all other Philoſophies, but that which was in uſe, judging nothing more oppoſite than that to true eloquence. It was that likewiſe which hindred *Demoſthenes* from embrace any Party, amidſt the many Sects which in his time ſprung up at *Athens*; that he might not wander from the uſual ſentiments and common ways, which are fitteſt to perſwade. And for all that *Julius Cæſar* was ſo ambitious to be a great Philoſopher, yet he made it his only buſineſs to become popular, that he might the better gain upon the minds of the people. In fine, what-ever men ſay, one can hardly retain the Character of a wiſeman, in deviating from the common opinions, nor of a publick ſpirit by embracing private ſentiments. And to extend this to all Profeſſions, how ſhould a Poet be laughed at, who, following the opinion of *Copernicus*, would

would make the Earth turn round the Sun: or who, according to the Syſtem of *Deſcartes*, ſhould never ſpeak of Stars or Conſtellations, without ſpeaking of whirlings and of ſubtile matter? how ridiculous ſhould one be, what wit ſoever he might have, with ſo dainty principles!

XXV.

Nevertheleſs there is nothing nowadays more in uſe with Philoſophers, and nothing bears greater rule than that kind of humour: For men ſeek only to ſet off their parts by new and extraordinary ſentiments, and leave the way of common ſenſe becauſe it is too much beaten. When one has got a more working brain than others, he falls on a fanſie of ſpeaking that which other men never ſaid. This whimſicalneſs, as *Cicero* ſays, made *Arceſilas* be taken for a ſeditious perſon, who overthrew the old Academy, to erect a new one. And *Ramus*, by that humour in theſe laſt Ages, was like to have deſtroyed the Univerſity of *Paris*: For, that he might confute the falſe *Peripateticks*,

teticks; he attacked the true; and to reſtore the Schools to peace, he became their diſturber: He was a learned man, bold to decide; but naturally troubleſome: he only imitated *Laurentius Valla* and *Ludovicus Vives*, two great Criticks in the former Age, that he might ſet up for an Innovator. In fine, men often diſpute thus, only that by a fanſie of innovation they may overthrow what is beſt eſtabliſhed. When men have not the power to make new Opinions, they find a way to give a new garb to the ancient; and that they may paſs for Authors at any rate, begin the change of ſentiments by the change of language: Men give new names, as *Zeno* did heretofore, to Opinions which are not new: and what do they not to ſpeak in a different ſtrain from others, and to gain reputation at any rate whatſoever? But ſeeing the libertinage of ſentiments proceeds from the licentiouſneſs of manners, the mind ſtands in need of barriers to keep it within bounds. Religion, Laws, Cuſtom, Educa-

Education, Puniſhments and Rewards, ought to ſerve it for a Bridle when it begins to ramble; yet ſometimes it revolts againſt all theſe: and when it hath once caſt off the yoke, and runs out beyond the common Opinions, there is no kind of extravagancy that comes amiſs to it. This makes Laws neceſſary: For Civil Authority ought to have a hand in regulating the ſentiments of men whoſe minds are naturally extravagant.

XXVI.

There are ſome minds naturally free in their ſentiments, and others born ſlaves: The one ſway the others by an aſcendant of birth, and the others ſuffer themſelves to be governed through a weakneſs of wit; they are ſo dependent through the quality of their genius, that they are only fit to receive the impreſſions that are given them, and to follow the motions that others inſpire into them. From this defect and weakneſs have ſprung the different Sects of Philoſophers: For as there are ſome ſo bold as to raiſe themſelves a-

bove

bove others, there are likewiſe many ſo timorous and dependent, as to ſubmit to them, and to entertain no opinion nor ſentiment, but with a dependance on their Maſters. There are alſo ſome minds ſo light and credulous, and who ſo freely reſign themſelves, that the raveries of other men guide their reaſon and conduct: the ſpirit of bondage extends it ſelf even to their hearts and thoughts, becauſe they are too weak to retain the liberty of chuſing ſentiments of their own. But what is more ſtrange, there are ſometimes obſcure and ſullen ſpirits, whoſe notions are naturally perplexed and confuſed, and yet are liſtened to like Oracles; and who gain a kind of Empire over mens minds, and no body can tell wherefore; unleſs it be that they are bolder and more poſitive in their deciſions than others: and ſuch blades procure authority only by preſumption and boldneſs. This was the way that *Paracelſus* got into vogue in the laſt Age: his affected obſcurity made him conſiderable: his credit was built

built particularly on this, that he ſpake not like other men, and that no body underſtood him: his confidence in playing the Maſter without Reaſon, won him diſciples, and by that means his Doctrine received a myſterious air, which raiſed him Followers. It is partly by that way alſo that *Deſcartes* has got reputation: the entangled anſwers which he makes to the difficulties that he forms to himſelf, are always new difficulties which buſie the Reader: men take pleaſure to ſee themſelves led from obſcurity to obſcurity, without knowing whither they are going. Yet that Author does pleaſe by that art, becauſe it is thereby that he ſeems oraculous. His Interpreter that endeavoured to render him more intelligible, by a new explication of his Natural Philoſophy which he publiſhed lately, hath robbed it of part of its beauty, by putting it in a plainer dreſs. Nothing ſeems to give ſo great ſatisfaction in that admirable piece, as the trouble there is to underſtand it. That obſcure ſtile has ſomewhat more myſterious

ſterious: the quality of being incomprehenſible is a great charm to his Diſciples, who admire him more for that, than for any thing beſides. And that obſcurity is an art which ſome men employ, and wherewith our blockiſhneſs is ſatisfied.

XXVII.

Subtile and quick wits are not always fitteſt for Philoſophy. It were better to condenſe the imagination by ſomething that is groſs, than to ſuffer it to evaporate in too quaint ſpeculations. The plain common ſenſe of *Socrates* triumphed over all the arts and quirks of the Sophiſts. Philoſophy becomes only abſtracted, when it leaves off to be ſolid: men addict themſelves to formalities, when they have nothing that is real to ſay; and never think of betaking themſelves to ſubtilty, but when they are out of hopes to make Reaſon prevail by ſimplicity. That ſame *Protagoras* who was the firſt that deviſed captious Reaſonings, took that ſubtle way, becauſe his mind was ſtuffed with nothing but falſe Notions.

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He was no true Philoſopher, ſayes *Aulus Gellius*, becauſe having rendered himſelf redoubtable by his arguments he became the greateſt jangler of the *Sophiſts*. All was ſpoilt, ſaith *Seneca*, by ſtriving too much to refine every thing. For to make a vain oſtentation of wit men left the eſſential part of Sciences, began to weaken the truth of things by the artifice of words, and made uſe of Sophiſms when they wanted ſolid reaſons. By this new art *Nauſiphanes* and *Parmenides* turned all things topſie turvie. By this, *Cleantes*, *Chryſippus*, and the reſt of the *Stoicks* made their wiſe King an Effigy, whom they furniſhed with Titles of Nobility and Treaſures, that conſiſted only in fair words and magnificent expreſſions, as *Cicero* pleaſantly upbraides them. So the Simplicity of reaſon was corrupted by the artifice of diſcourſe: and men played with truth inſtead of uſing it with reſpect. This was the fault of the *Spaniards* of the laſt age: they did with Philoſophy, as with policy, by the quality of their Spirits

Spirits born to reflexions, they drew them both out into unconceivable ſubtilities; and there was not any Scholar who did not refine his Maſter. From whence happened a diſorder like to that whereof *Seneca* complained heretofore: diſputation became all the fruit of Philoſophy, and it was more made uſe of to try the wit than to cure the mind. Let us be ſatisfied with the common wiſdom that is in uſe, and with the reaſon that we find in the Commerce of the World, without keeping ſuch a ſtir and making ſo much ado: one runs a hazard of turning Fool, when he would be otherwiſe; and there is nothing more unprofitable in the common conduct of life, than thoſe two exquiſite Opinions which are made uſe of to ſubtilize in Sciences.

XXVIII.

Philoſophy taken the wrong way hath ſpoiled a great many men, and that ſtudy of wiſdom ill underſtood hath made a good many fools. *Empedocles* had a lofty and high genius; *Lucretius*

Lucretius compares him to the greateſt of the Ancients; but the vapours of Melancholy meeting with an overſtrained Application, and a too headſtrong ſtudy, ſo ſullied his imagination and altered his brain, that he became mad; and in the fit of his rage threw himſelf into Mount *Ætna*, where he was devoured by flames. *Horace* pretends that he endeavoured to render himſelf immortal by ſuch a fair piece of boldneſs. *Henry Cornelius Agrippa* in theſe laſt Ages ſo weakened his Spirit by reading of *Plato*, and by the Doctrine of the *Platoniſts*, that he fell into extravagancy, as he himſelf confeſſes. *Peter D'Apono* a Phyſician of *Padua*, who flouriſhed under *Clement* the Seventh, ſo marred his imagination by reading of the *Arabian* Philoſophers, and by too frequent meditation on the Aſtrology of *Alfraganus*, that he was put into the Inquiſition, as having been ſuſpected of Magick. *Pomponatius* and *Cremoninus*, the one Profeſſor of Philoſophy at *Padua*, and the other at *Bolonia*, became impious by

too immoderate ſtudy of Philoſophy, and left to poſterity the marks of their Extravagancy. They were Philoſophers who did injury to reaſon, by by making ſo bad an uſe of it. It may be ſaid alſo, that Libertinage was the moſt uſual effect which Philoſophy produced in moſt part of the Wits of that Age, and which rendred it odious. For by the wicked uſe that men made of it, they ſpoiled their Judgment, endeavouring to improve their reaſon. But to be ſhort, if the moſt regular wiſdom of man is ſubject to ſtraying, what is to be expected from the falſe glimpſes of an inordinate Philoſophy, joyned to the weakneſs and extravagances of a brain-ſick head?

XXIX.

It is no ſmall progreſs in Philoſophy, to have learnt how much obſcurity and uncertainty is mingled with our exacteſt knowledge, and to be ſatisfied to be ignorant of that which cannot be known. That is it which makes the knowing man ſpeak with trembling; his great capacity makes him the more timorous,

timorous, becauſe the light of his underſtanding diſcovers to him more of the darkneſs of his mind: the greater his penetration is, the more it lets him ſee his own weakneſs, and obliges him to diſtruſt his ſtrength. That made *Ariſtotle* ſay, that old men are more jealous and incredulous than others; becauſe the experience which they have of the uncertainty of things, renders them more cautious and circumſpect. *Socrates* could not conceive why the Oracle had called him the wiſeſt of men: he examined himſelf, and found nothing worthy of that elogy; unleſs perhaps that he was wiſe, becauſe he did not believe himſelf to be ſo: his knowledge ſerved to make him the better underſtand his ignorance, which he frankly confeſſed. *Epicurus* was naturally wiſe, for he was a Philoſopher even in his pleaſures: He was ſo ſharp-ſighted, that his Brother *Nicocles* ſays, in *Plutarch*, that Nature had aſſembled all the Atoms of knowledge and wiſdom, to compoſe his perſon; whilſt he him-

ſelf ſays that he knows nothing. His Friends ſtun him with acclamations and praiſes, and he minds them not. But beſides that modeſty which is the vertue of great men, there is a ſage and diſcreet ignorance, that in the conduct of life can doubt of things, whereof no certainty can be had, and is willing not to know ſuch things, whereof no knowledge is to be attained, unleſs men would dive into that which is inſcrutable. For Nature having reſerved to her ſelf ſome certain ſecrets that are above our reach, it is great wiſdom to ſhut our eyes, and not to pry into ſuch Myſteries. There is no truth but may appear falſe, nor falſhood which may not ſeem true: and on this uncertainty is grounded the doubtfulneſs which the learned man ſhows in his judgments. It is alſo to be acknowledged, that this circumſpection is one of the great fruits that may be reaped from Philoſophy. So that the opinion of thoſe Philoſophers is to be eſteemed, who place the ſupreme knowledge of man and his true reaſon,

reaſon, in acknowledging the weakneſs of his wit, and the uncertainty of his judgment: but when they deprive the ſenſes of all credit, becauſe they may may be deceived, and doubt of every thing, becauſe they have ground to doubt of ſome things, they are not to be liſtned to. Theſe are extremities far contrary to true Philoſophy, which only enjoyns moderation.

XXX.

But how much there is of folly to doubt of nothing, and to doubt of every thing: ſo much there is of imprudence to approve all, and to approve nothing. To preſerve the entire liberty of ones judgment, without being prepoſſeſſed with falſe Reaſon, or pretended authority, is a ſtrength of mind whereof few are capable. The proud man approves of nothing, for fear he ſubmit himſelf by approving of ſomewhat; the light and ſuperficial perſon approves every thing, that he may ſpare himſelf the pains of examining what is propoſed to him. To cloſe with every thing,

and to cloſe with nothing, are other extremities to be avoided by a wiſe man. The deſign of that Proconſul of *Greece*, who called together to his houſe all the Philoſophers of different Sects that were then in vogue at *Athens*, that he might bring them to agreement, appeared ridiculous to *Pomponius Atticus*: but the deſign of that *Arabian* Philoſopher, who undertook to refute the opinions of all the other Philoſophers, and to overthrow their Doctrine, by a Book written to that purpoſe, which he called *The Deſtruction of Philoſophy*, ſeems to me more ridiculous. *Averroes* wrote a Confutation of that Book, which he calls, *The Deſtruction of the Deſtruction*, and which is one of the beſt of his pieces. For I look upon it to be the utmoſt point of extravagancy, conſidering the way that men live in the world, for one to ſuſpend his judgment amongſt ſo many truths, and ſo many falſhoods univerſally acknowledged, and to apply himſelf to no ſide. There is likewiſe weakneſs to follow only the ſentiments

timents of others, and to become a ſlave to all their opinions: but it is a far more dangerous condition, to be hardened by a ſpirit of pride, againſt that inclination which man naturally hath to be perſwaded by reaſon and truth, ſo as to believe nothing, and to doubt of every thing. I like not that blind ſubmiſſion of the Diſciples of *Pythagoras*, who reaſoned no more after that he had ſpoken: his authority ſerved them for reaſon. Thoſe imperious ways, which force men to yield, are fitter to overturn the mind, than to inſtruct it. For, if we ſpeak properly, all the liberty that man hath, is his right to judge of things as he pleaſes; and there is nothing that depends on himſelf but the uſe which he makes of his opinion. All theſe exceſſes are blame-worthy in a Philoſopher, who ought to mind nothing, but to hear reaſon, and find out truth. It is true there are ſome ſpirits, who ſtand in need of exerciſe and nouriſhment that they may be employed: all goes well with them, even falſe Noti-

ons, empty Imaginations, chimerical Deſigns, and rather than have nothing to think on, they amuſe themſelves with the Viſions of others, their own heads having nothing to preſent them with for entertainment. From this Character men ſtumble on another more pernicious, which is a levity in believing every thing. Let us avoid theſe extremities; let us examine what is doubtful, but let us give our aſſent to what is true: let us never be impoſed upon by conjectures, but let us not reſiſt evidence; and let us above all things conſult reaſon and common ſenſe, which are the ſureſt means to attain to the knowledge of the truth.

XXXI.

When we ſeriouſly examine the motives that incline moſt part of Philoſophers to eſpouſe a Party in the Opinions which are publickly profeſſed, we find in their conduct nothing leſs than Philoſophy: For it is often without deliberation, without choice, before maturity of age, by chance, and even ſometimes without thinking on it, that they

they cleave to an Opinion. As it commonly happens to thoſe who come to be of a Sentiment, by the Cloaths they wear, by the Country they belong to, by the company they keep, by the intereſt of the courſe of life they follow, by the Cabal that wheadles them, by the Croud that draws them along, by the Torrent that hurries them, and always by any other Conſideration than that of Reaſon and Prudence. Wherein they are like thoſe Philoſophers, of whom *Cicero* ſpeaks drollingly; *ad quamcunq; diſciplinam quaſi tempeſtate delati, ad eam tanquam ad ſaxum adhæreſcunt:* who ſtick to an Opinion, as men toſſed in a ſtorm cleave to the Rock on which the tempeſt has caſt them. By this means men ſubmit themſelves to the tyranny of prepoſſeſſion, becauſe they want ſtrength of diſcerning to ſet them above prejudices: they forſake their own judgment, to be led by the fancies of another: they defend with heat, what they have undertaken without Reaſon; and maintain raſhly what they have

have embraced inconſiderately. And when one is prepoſſeſſed by a ſentiment, he makes it a ſenſeleſs point of honour to maintain a fooliſh opinion. It happens even ſometimes, that the animoſity of Parties puts a ſpirit into thoſe that have none; and that many times they have no other talent, nor other reaſon, but the bitterneſs whereby they are animated. To conclude, theſe raſh and fortuitous embracings of the ſentiments of others, look ſo ridiculouſly, that it were far better not at all to be a Philoſopher, than to be one of that ſtamp. The choice that is to be made in theſe occaſions, is to make none at all. For a Philoſophy ſo little founded on reaſon is but a mere debauchery of Wit, and real weakneſs.

XXXII.

Truth is now-a-dayes ſo perſecuted by all the diſguiſes of the Age, that men have not ingenuity enough to ſpeak candidly, or courage to be ſincere. He muſt be reſolute that would be a Philoſopher in good earneſt. It is a great-

neſs

neſs of ſoul to ſpeak as one thinks, and think as one ſpeaks; as that *Roman* did, of whom *Quintilian* ſpeaks, *Scias eum ſentire quæ dicit*; You may be aſſured he ſpeaks what he thinks. A Moral Philoſophy from the hand of ſo candid a man would have been of great force, and the loſs of the Treatiſe of Vertue which he compoſed is great: for never man ſpake with greater freedom than he. He imitated that ſtrain of *Socrates*, who could not diſguiſe his ſentiments. Men are never ſubject to ſpeak againſt their Conſciences but when they are weak: intereſt, paſſion, head-ſtrongneſs, prejudice, the torrent of cuſtome, dependance, are the moſt uſual obſtacles to ſincerity, and the purity of our judgments. Such kinds of weakneſſes only make men forſake their own ſentiments, to embrace the Opinions of others: And it is but a lowneſs of Spirit, and a baſe complaiſance that make men ſquare their Opinions, by the judgment of thoſe they depend on, and whom they deſire to pleaſe. The truth is the moſt lovely

lovely of all Philoſophies, is to know how to live; that is, to accommodate ones ſelf to perſons, affairs, and ſeaſons, as reaſon requires it: Yet that is to be done freely and without conſtraint; that we may not imitate thoſe weak ſouls, whoſe ſentiments on every thing are borrowed, and who abaſe themſelves to condeſcend to Opinions, to which they can hardly ſubmit, becauſe they want courage to retain their entire liberty. So ſervile a kind of Philoſophy is but a counterfeit wiſdom. Such was that of the *Senators*, who lived under *Tiberius* and *Nero*, of whom *Tacitus* ſpeaks; who having proſtituted themſelves to the moſt infamous kind of flattery, put on the Mask of Philoſophy to ſave them from perſecution, wanting courage to be true Philoſophers, and truly to ſpeak their Judgments in the Senate.

XXXIII.

Diſputation is an Art ſet in vogue by the Schooles to rouſe Youth, and to exerciſe their Wits: it ſerves to inculcate reaſon to theſe that underſtand it not

not, and to impoſe ſilence on bablers; but it ſerves likewiſe to feed animoſity, to give a fair colour to all ſorts of paſſion, and to maintain opinionativeneſs, in deſpight of Truth and ſound Judgment. There is no Philoſopher who becomes not by this fine Art, a man for progreſs, and clearing of doubts. For every diſputant may undertake to perſwade others of his Opinion by noiſe, when Reaſon fails him. In fine, diſputation, as all things elſe, has its good and evil: ſo that without pretending to condemn it, let us imploy it to thoſe uſes wherein it may do good. But let us open the eyes of rational men, that we may not abuſe them; for moſt-times men only diſpute, becauſe they underſtand not one another. *Thales* has vacuity in horrour, *Democritus* bogles not at it; let them but mutually explain themſelves, and they are good friends. *Epicurus* believes his ſenſes too much, *Empedocles* believes them not at all: they ſhall diſpute no more, when they have once agreed upon it what the errour is, which

which hinders the belief that ſhould be given them. Let us make a *Carteſian* underſtand, what ſenſe and ſenſation is, and he ſhall eaſily allow that a Horſe is a Beaſt, though now he believes it not. Men have diſputed almoſt three hundred years about Liberty, becauſe as yet they are not agreed what it is: Let us make appear to Philoſophers and Divines, who have ſpoken of it ſo differently, wherein it conſiſts, and they ſhall ſpeak in the ſame Language. For in fine, when men have reaſon, and are agreed about principles, there is no more diſputing. That great Diverſity of Opinions which reign in the World, proceeds only from the different manner that Men think and ſpeak of them. This made *Ariſtotle* ſay, that when two rational men are of a different ſentiment, it is commonly becauſe they ſpeak differently; and all diſputation is more about words than things.

XXXIV.

Though the Philoſophy which is taught in the Schools at preſent, with that

that method of diſputation introduced there, hath been much cenſured by *Ramus*, a Profeſſor of the Univerſity of *Paris*, about the end of the laſt Age, by *Gaſſendus* in the beginning of the preſent, and generally by all the modern Natural Philoſophers of any reputation; becauſe it hath ſuffered much of the purity of the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle* to be corrupted by its Profeſſors, who profeſs themſelves to be his greateſt Followers: yet for all that I ſtill think it the moſt convenient, in regard of the way that men live in at preſent, yea and the moſt proper for Youth, at the age that they apply themſelves to it; becauſe that after all that hath been ſaid, it ſtamps on the mind an impreſſion of order, to make men ſpeak exactly, and with method of every thing: it teaches us to reduce unto certain principles the matters we treat of, that we may methodically deliver our opinions: it exerciſes the ſpirits of youth by the ſubtleties of Logick and Metaphyſick, in the only way that they are capable of: it gives them but an abridg-

abridgment of Moral Philoſophy, whilſt their underſtanding is not ripe enough to ſupport a long deduction of Concluſions, which are entertainments too ſerious and calm for the heat and edge of youth; which is an age of too little experience, to delight in the contemplation of the Works of Nature by a ſerious ſtudy of Natural Philoſophy, and of too narrow a capacity to comprehend the vaſt extent of humane Affairs. It were however to be wiſhed, that that part of Philoſophy were handled more methodically in the Schools, and that the moſt important Experiments and Obſervations of Nature were more particularly diſcuſſed: But it often comes to paſs that Maſters affect to teach uſeleſs things, to make it be thought that they will not forget the neceſſary. However, the method that is at preſent in uſe, might be brought to greater perfection: but that perfection is only to be expected from the genius and candour of the Profeſſors, who can wave things indifferent, and inſiſt on what is eſſential, according to the

the meaſure of knowledge that experience may furniſh them with. For matters being in the ſtate they are, there is no great reaſon to expect as to that a well-adjuſted Reformation. To conclude, it is probable that the Laws, which ſuffer no innovation in the uſe of things univerſally eſtabliſhed, will not countenance any other method, but what is now at preſent followed in the Univerſities; that they may not allow too great a freedom to the paſſion that men have naturally for new Opinions, the tendency whereof is of dangerous conſequence in a well-ordered ſtate; eſpecially conſidering that Philoſophy is one of the inſtruments whereof Religion makes uſe in explaining its deciſions, as we ſhall ſee at the end of this Treatiſe. Theſe are the Reflexions which we have made on Philoſophy in general: Let us now proceed to theſe which are to be made on the parts of Philoſophy ſeverally.

The end of the firſt Part.

Reflexions
ON
LOGICK.

I.

LOGICK may be ſaid to be the firſt ray of Evidence, and the firſt draught of Method, that is diſplayed on Sciences: becauſe its buſineſs is to form the judgment, which is the uſual inſtrument that the mind employs in reaſoning truly, and in diſcerning truth and falſhood exactly, by diſtinguiſhing what is ſimple from what is compound, and what is contingent from what is neceſſary. And ſeeing this Art is the ſource from whence flows certainty, there is but little

little ſecurity in all the Reaſonings of men without its aſſiſtance. So that its chief office is to diſcover truth, and make Reaſon palpable. But that Art became counterfeit by the character of the ſpirits of thoſe that firſt made uſe of it: That ray, though pure and incorruptible in it ſelf, was corrupted; and humane Reaſon, which ſubmitted it ſelf to that conduct, fell into Errour, by the bad uſe it made of that Science. Inſomuch that Logick, which was only invented to imprint a Character of juſtneſs on the mind, did help to miſlead it: and the firſt Precepts of Dialectick which were given to men for a Rule, ſerved as ſnares laid for them, to make them fall into Errour. For as there is nothing ſo ſecret as the thoughts, ſo men found the art to diſguiſe them into a thouſand ſhapes; as may be ſeen in the Hiſtory and Revolutions of this Science.

II.

The firſt Philoſophers who made more uſe of reaſon than reaſoning, addicted themſelves ſo much to the ſtudy

of Natural Philoſophy, that they minded Logick but little: they reaſoned in their obſervations, without knowing the Art of reaſoning. There was no Logick in uſe in the School of *Pythagoras*, but his ſole Authority; his Diſciples were ſilent when he had ſpoken. It is true, *Apuleius* pretends that *Plato* took his firſt Notions of Logick from the *Pythagoreans*. But *Ariſtotle* aſſures us, that though there be exact enough Definitions to be found in their writings, yet they knew not Dialectick, whereof the Art was not then diſcovered, nor the Rules eſtabliſhed. *Zeno Eleates* — a man of a quick and ſubtile Spirit, was the firſt that found in diſcourſe that natural connexion of principles and conſequences, which he reduced into an Art, as *Plato* teſtifies and *Proclus* confirms. From whence it appears that the Logick of *Zeno* conſiſted in obſerving the dependance which propoſitions have one on another, and upon that obſervation to rank them in their natural order. That was his Method; he explained nothing but

but by way of Dialogue, and brought in two or three Perſons, who by queſtions and anſwers made a Methodical Reaſoning on every thing: and from this Art, he was the firſt that called that Science Dialectick; whereby the way of handling Philoſophy in verſe which was uſed before, ceaſed. For in Dialogue Men found the means to retain an agreeable air, without loſing Solidity: and that way *Plato* followed, as the moſt proper for inſtruction. The cuſtome was to interrogate him whom they taught, and to make him anſwer according to his Cpacity. *Zeno* who was ſubtle, mingled a quaint and captious air with his Method, whereby he puzled the mind. *Protagoras*, the Diſciple of *Zeno*, who had likewiſe *Democritus* for Maſter, refined that Method, and made it ſtill more nice by his Sophiſms; for wanting ſolidity he endeavoured to be ſubtile, and coming ſhort of a Philoſopher, he ſet up for a Sophiſt. *Ariſtotle* ſayes that he framed common-places of queſtions and anſwers, whereof he made

an Art to ſurprize and perplex the mind. *Simon* that famous Artiſt of *Athens*, of whom *Socrates* ſpeaks ſo much, and *Crito* his friend, were likewiſe the Diſciples of *Zeno* and great Dialecticians, as *Diogenes Laertius* aſſures us.

III.

Euclide of *Megara* ſubtilized more all the ſubtility of Dialectick; and added to it a briſker way of diſputing by giving more heat to his diſcourſe: he drove that even to exceſs, which gave occaſion to *Timon* to reproach him, for having inſpired into thoſe of *Megara*, Λύσσαν ἐριστικὴν a rage of diſputation, by that Captious and Sophiſtick Logick that he taught them, which *Socrates* approved not, becauſe there was no Sincerity in that way. It was *Euclide* and his Scholar *Eubulides*, who invented the Sophiſms, which became ſince ſo famous in the Schools, whereof *Diogenes Laertius* makes mention; which after all have nothing real but their ſubtility, as the *Dilemma*, the Horned Argument, the *Sorites*, theſe ſo famous *Megarick* interrogations, of which

which *Plutarch* ſpeaks; and all the Pettifoggings of that kind, which made Dialectick ſo contemptible at *Athens*, *Socrates* was obliged to render it ridiculous in his diſcourſes againſt the *Sophiſts*, to the end he might undeceive mens minds in the Opinion thereof. From *Euclide Demoſthenes* learnt the Art of the *Dilemma*, and theſe preſſing ways that rendered him ſo vehement in that manner of Eloquence which he followed. The Logick of *Plato*, which is the ſame with that of *Socrates*, conſiſts more in Examples than Precepts; it hath nothing that is particular for reaſoning, becauſe *Socrates* valued not that part of Philoſophy. Though both of them placed the firſt diſcerning of Truth and Falſhood in the ſenſes; yet they pretended that the mind ought to judge thereof, and that Men ſhould only refer themſelves to that Judgment: becauſe that without ſticking on the ſurface of things, it penetrated into the eternal and immutable principle of them, which they called the Idea, and which alone they eſtabliſhed as the rule

of the diſtinction which ſhould be made in the Judgment of things. But ſeeing the Soul of Man was but a ſmall ſpark of the Univerſal Soul of the World, and according to them, a Beam of the Divinity; they thought that that particle united to its principle was ignorant of nothing; but that entring into the Body, by that alliance it contracted Ignorance and Impiety, from which Logick ſerved to purify it. *Alcinous* who explains exactly enough the Dialectick of *Plato*, ſays, That that Philoſopher made uſe of Diviſion, Definition, and Induction, to remount to the Fountain-head of firſt Truth, from whence he drew his principles, to the end he might think and ſpeak wiſely of every thing; and that that was his moſt uſual Method. Diviſion was as a ladder, whereby to aſcend from ſenſible things to things intellectual. Definition was a way to lead from things demonſtrated, to thoſe that were not: and Induction the means to find the truth by the principle of ſuppoſitions. For by Diviſion he came to Definition, and by Definition to Induction

and

and Demonſtration. And *Diogenes Laertius* aſſures us, that that was the moſt general way which *Plato* made uſe of in making his Demonſtrations. *Cicero* and *Quintilian* are of the ſame Opinion. However, it muſt be granted, that *Socrates* in his manner of reaſoning addicted himſelf more to Interrogations than Anſwers; becauſe the Character of his Mind was fitter to raiſe, than to reſolve difficulties. Moreover, it appears by the Principles of the Logick of *Socrates* and *Plato*, which allowed no truth but in the Ideas, that all their School made Profeſſion of knowing nothing; becauſe that Men cannot judge of ſingle and Individual beings, but by the ſenſes which are fallacious: So that the Diſciples of *Plato* placed all their Logick in not believing any thing too ſlightly, and in retaining the entire Liberty of Judgment, among the uncertainties which are found almoſt in every thing. And in fine, upon that great maxime of a general Incomprehenſibility of all things, was the Academy reformed under *Lacydes* and *Arceſilas*, and the

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Sect of the *Scepticks* and *Pyrrhoniſts* raiſed, who doubted of things that were moſt certain. The *Academicks* underſtood very well, that nothing could be underſtood; the *Pyrrhoniſts* did not ſo much as underſtand that. And ſo far the Principles of the Logick of *Plato* trained on the minds of men.

IV.

There appeared nothing before *Ariſtotle*, regulated and ſetled in Logick. That ſublime and intelligent genius ſo ſounded the Abyſs of the mind of Man, that he diſcovered all its movements, by the exact diſtinction that he made of the operations thereof. Men had not as yet launched out into the Ocean, nor known the depth of the thoughts of man. *Ariſtotle* was the firſt that diſcovered that new way of attaining to Science by the evidence of Demonſtration, and of proceeding geometrially to demonſtration by the infallibility of Syllogiſm, the moſt accompliſhed work and the greateſt attempt of the Wit of Man. Thus you have an abridgment of the Art and Method of the Logick of *Ariſtotle*, which is ſo ſure, that without

without it, one can have no perfect aſſurance in reaſoning, and which is a rule to make men juſt and exact in conceiving what is to be conceved. But what Road hath he taken to attain to that, and what Art hath he employed to fix the mind of man naturally volatile, and to render it inexpugnable in what it knows? It behoved him firſt to remove all ambiguity and equivocation from expreſſion, make a perfect Demonſtration of Humane Reaſoning, which has no better Foundation than Words and Thoughts cloathed with all their imperfections, and to give the greateſt ſolidity of Science to the moſt uncertain and undetermined matter that can be imagined. He marches in the purſuit of that deſign by ways then unknown to Reaſon, and whereof before him there was hardly any tract: he removes from the thoughts all the defects whereby expreſſion is able to impoſe upon any man, and diſperſes all the miſts wherewith the imagination may offuſcate the mind. For that end in the Book of *Interpretation* which is a kind

a kind of rational Grammar, he examines the vertue and ſignification of words; in the *Categories* he forms the true notions of terms, to prepare them for Diviſion and Definition, by reducing them to their natural ſenſe; in his Books of *Analyticks*, he lays down the rules of the Modal Converſion of all ſorts of propoſitions, and of the different Figures of Syllogiſm, whereof he ſetles the principal grounds on three Axioms of his Logick: and all that conſtructure is purely a work of his own. He demonſtrates nothing in his Book of *Categories*, which are but diſpoſitions to Demonſtration: he demonſtrates nothing in his Book of *Interpretation*, but the principle of contradictory propoſitions: but in the Books of *Analyticks* his conceptions are almoſt ſo many demonſtrations, and his demonſtrations ſo many principles. The *Topicks* are but common places of dialectick or probable Arguments. The *Elenchs* are all the Sophiſms imaginable in their ſource. The two rules which he eſtabliſhes for the perfect compoſi-

tion

tion of a Syllogiſm, are, That there ought to be nothing falſe in the matter, nor nothing faulty in the form. His manner of writing has nothing of the faintneſs of the diſcourſe of *Plato*, nor of the diffuſed ſtile of his Age; all is vigorous and cloſe. In fine, that pure Geometrical Method of Demonſtration, which he followed, hath appeared always ſo exact, that it hath been uſed by the learned in all Sciences, as the moſt ſolid, and moſt conſonant to the uſual manner of reaſoning: and that conſtruction of Syllogiſm, which is the true Logick of *Ariſtotle*, is ſo perfect in its kind, that nothing can have ſince been added to it, or diminiſhed from it, without corrupting the ſame. Men of ſound Judgment can admit of no other manner, nor no other principles of reaſoning, but thoſe of *Ariſtotle*. And ſeeing in all Ages men have diſputed againſt reaſon, becauſe it is Opinion commonly that ſwayes the World; the Learned Ages have been only diſtinguiſhed from others, by the eſteem

they

they have had of the Logick of *Ariſtotle*. For, to ſpeak the truth, what he hath done for the rectifying of reaſon, by cutting off equivocation from terms, and confuſion from conceptions, is one of the greateſt Maſter-pieces of Humane Reaſon; it muſt notwithſtanding be acknowledged, that the principal ſcope of that Logick is not ſo much to teach man the Art of reaſoning, which he knows naturally, as to give rules for examining falſe reaſonings, that they may be well diſtinguiſhed from the true, and to guard one againſt the Sophiſms of *Zeno* and *Parmenides*. For there was forged in his time a falſe method of reaſoning, which the Sophiſts put in vogue, and which he endeavours to overthrow by making it known. Upon this Idea all the deſign of his Logick does move, that he may form the Laws of an Art which gives Laws to all others.

V.

The School of *Zeno* exerciſed themſelves ſo much in Dialectick, that the Sect of the Stoicks ſubtilized more upon

on it, than all the other Sects beſides. It was perhaps the difficulty they had to maintain their imaginary Morality, which obliged them to ſupply by their ſubtlety what was wanting in ſolidity to their Doctrine. So they added to the Artifices of *Zeno Eleates*, to the wranglings of *Euclid* of *Megara*, and to the quaintneſs of *Socrates*, all the artifice of *Cleantes* and *Chryſippus*, the greateſt Dialecticians that ever were, that they might make to themſelves a new Logick. To that it was properly that they bent all their wit, ſays *Cicero*, that they might make to themſelves an artificial Reaſon, having but little real to maintain the falſe wiſdom of their Philoſophy: it may be ſaid that they briſtled their wit with all the prickles of Dialectick, to arm themſelves againſt their Adverſaries, and that they became the moſt redoubtable Pettifoggers of the School, that they might ſafely be the greateſt amplifiers, in the notion that they forged to themſelves of their wiſe-man. Nor did any thing give greater reputation to

their

their opinion, than the art that they employed to defend it. They altered nothing of the grounds of the Dialectick of *Ariſtotle*; except that they added to the Syllogiſm, which was of common uſe amongſt them, a more animated air of diſputation, by quick, ſhort, and preſſing Interrogatories, which gave great vigour to their reaſonings. That knacky and nice humour which held them commonly, made them turn all their Dialectick into perverſe ſophiſtication, that they might invent new modes of Syllogiſm leſs natural, but more captious than thoſe of *Ariſtotle*. It is pretended, that *Chryſippus* was ſo much addicted to that Science, that he alone wrote of it above three hundred Volumes: but he weakened the ſtrength of it, ſays *Seneca*, by too much refining. It was he and his Succeſſors who firſt brought in vogue the formalities and virtual diſtinctions: it is true, that by the vivacity of their wit they gave too great authority to the imagination, which makes things always greater than

than they are, by giving too much vertue to expreſſions, and too great a power to terms. There was nothing but words and their ſignification diſputed of in their Schools. And thereby they became the firſt Authors of that Philoſophy, which was revived by the Nominaliſts in theſe laſt Ages: at leaſt they have much reſembled one another in their way of ſubtilizing too much on the terms they made uſe of. But that Dialectick which conſiſted almoſt altogether in words, made the Stoicks ſomewhat ſuperficial; and placed all their Philoſophy on their lips. Yet ſeeing the Logick of *Ariſtotle* was long unknown, becauſe his Writings were ſo; the Logick of *Zeno* paſſed current in the following Ages more than any other; it was even the firſt that was taught at *Rome*. And it is on theſe ſubtleties of Logick, that *Plautus* plays in ſeveral places of his Comedies, as *Cicero* did afterwards in many parts of his Works. For the Stoicks by reaſon of their ſubtlety were decryed at *Rome*.

VI.

Epicurus fell upon a method of reaſoning leſs artificious, but more delicate than that of *Zeno*. What *Cicero* objects to him that he deſpiſed Dialectick, is not true but in reſpect of that of the Stoicks, which he approved not, becauſe he found it to be punctilious. *Epicurus* took a plainer way. That analytical method of diviſion and argumentation introduced by *Ariſtotle* was unknown to him, which rendred him weak in diſpute. He ſought truth only by the ſenſes, which he called the firſt natural light of man; and that was his firſt Rule, as reflexion on the judgment of the ſenſes was his ſecond. And as he did acknowledge two kinds of truth, the one Natural and the other Moral; ſo he would have the ſenſes diſtinguiſh what is real, and the appetite, which is the way by which the heart declares it ſelf, purſue what is good and convenient for its ſtate: and that is it which he calls Moral Truth. This is in general the ground of his Doctrine; and theſe are its Principles.

1. That

1. That ſenſe cannot be deceived; becauſe the impreſſion that it receives from the object is always true, being wrought by a ſenſible ſpecies: but that the reaſoning which the Soul makes upon that impreſſion may be falſe. 2. That the opinion which is drawn from the ſenſation may be true or falſe. 3. That it is true when the judgment of the ſenſes is made in form, without let, and with ſuch evidence as Reaſon cannot reſiſt; and that it may be falſe, when it wants that evidence. Theſe are the principal Maxims of the Logick of *Epicurus*: upon which he grounds the different reaſonings of the Soul that are made in the mind, according to the ſympathy that there is between the Spirit and the Senſes. It is only, ſays he, upon the ideas and notices which the Soul receives by the Senſes, that are formed the doubt or opinion, the obſcurity or evidence, whereof it receives the impreſſion. Moreover that way of anticipated knowledge, which he calls προλήψις, preſumption, is in his Doctrine a kind of Idea of things in-

dividual re-united in a general conception: from whence he forms the rule of Definition, which he takes to be the only way of attaining to knowledge. By all theſe Principles he founded a more natural way of reaſoning than the other Philoſophers did. It is true that he grounded a part of the ſimplicity of his Logick upon the perſpicuity of terms, being perſwaded that all diſputes did commonly proceed but from the ambiguity of Propoſitions. He anſwered all Sophiſms by the ſole explication of the words. For when men underſtand themſelves, and are no more Beaſts, there is no more diſputing. But he was careful to rectifie the defect of that Principle in all his Reaſonings, by great circumſpection. And *Lucretius*, who in his Poem explains the Doctrine of *Epicurus*, propoſes to himſelf more than fourteen Objections which are made againſt the judgment of the Senſes, to which he anſwers ſo clearly in his fourth Book, that he leaves not a word to be ſaid more. In fine, plain common

mon ſenſe, maintained by ſome natural reflexions, was all the art of *Epicurus*: he made not ſo much ado about it, as the Stoicks did, who placed a part of their wit in the magnificence of their expreſſions, whereby they became ridiculous to the *Epicureans*.

VII.

After that the Writings of *Ariſtotle*, which were ſo long concealed, were diſcovered, and that his method was known, men addicted themſelves to it in ſucceeding times, as to the ſolideſt and ſureſt of all: the art of thinking and diſcourſing appearing in it, in its higheſt perfection, by the invention of Syllogiſm; to which all the meditation and reflexions of Philoſophers can adde nothing. *Galen* himſelf who had entertained other Notions on Logick, and who had compoſed a new Dialectick, which is loſt, followed at laſt that of *Ariſtotle*, and gave it even applauſe and reputation: and that new Figure of Syllogiſm, which he invented, paſſed only for an indirect method of demonſtration. *Alexander Aphrodiſeus*,

diſcus, *Simplicius*, *Ammonius*, *Philoponus*, amongſt the *Greeks*; *Apuleius*, S. *Auguſtine*, *Boetius*, *Thomas Aquinas*, and many others amongſt the *Latines* aſwell as the *Arabians*, laboured on the Logick of *Ariſtotle*, as on the beſt of all others. It is even true that there hath been nothing ſaid rationally ſince on that Science, which *Ariſtotle* had not thought on before: and it may be affirmed, that there has not any new thing almoſt been diſcovered, in the univerſal œconomy of the operations of the mind, ſince that Philoſopher hath written on it. Upon that admirable Model alſo was framed the Sect of the Scholaſticks or Schoolmen, who reigned ſo long in the Schools, and with ſo much authority. It is true that there happened therein a Schiſm between the Nominaliſts and Realiſts: but both of them in their diſputes reaſoned only on the Principles of *Ariſtotle*. I ſhall ſay nothing of the Logick of *Raymund Lully*, which is but the meer gibriſh of the Cabal, and a ranking up of words in an order that is but arbitrary, and which

which hath nothing of reality: it is an art of ſpeaking of all things without judgment, and of diſcourſing at random as much as men pleaſe. In fine, it is a very extravagant Notion of Logick, which *Peter Montuus* pretends to have been copied from head to tail, from an *Arabian* Philoſopher called *Abezebron*, proper to puzzle Antichriſt when he comes into the world. Upon this fair original *Raymund Lully* formed the Idea of his Logick, which could never as yet make men any thing but Enthuſiaſts or Ignorant. About two hundred years ago *Laurentius Valla* undertook to reform the Logick of *Ariſtotle*, by reducing the ten Categories into three, and cutting off the third Figure of Syllogiſm. He ſucceeded not in that boldneſs, for he had no Followers. *Ludovicus Vives* undertook another Reformation, which concerned the Schoolmen more than *Ariſtotle*; but likewiſe without ſucceſs. *Ramus* had no better luck in his deſign of overthrowing the credit of *Ariſtotle*, upon the Memoires of *Valla* and *Vives*.

For the Idea that he conceived of his new Dialectick contains nothing rational, but what he hath borrowed from the Dialectick of *Ariſtotle*, which he hath corrupted by endeavouring to reform it. *Cardan* compoſed a Logick, upon the Logick of *Ariſtotle*, of *Hippocrates*, of *Euclide*, of *Ptolomy*, and of *Galen*; but that Work hath nothing in it that is good, but what he hath taken from the geometrical method of *Ariſtotle*, which he brings into it.

VIII.

We ſhall now tell you our thoughts of the late Dialecticians. The Organ of *Bacon* is not methodical; it is made up of curious conceits, which proceed only from an exceſſive paſſion that that Author hath to ſignalize himſelf by new ſentiments, and to ſay what others have not ſaid. There is nothing leſs ſolid than the four Idols, which he makes the Principles of all things. Every thing there is metaphorical, and hardly any thing proper: that geometrical way of reaſoning in uſe among the

the Schoolmen is unknown to him. But the *Spaniards*, who are the Maſters of other people in the matter of Reflexions, refined Logick ſo much in the laſt Age, that they corrupted the Purity of Natural Reaſon, by the ſubtilty of their Reaſonings; falling into empty and abſtracted ſpeculations, which had nothing of reality. Theſe Philoſophers found an Art of enjoying Reaſon in ſpight of common-ſenſe; and of giving a colour, and I know not what ſpecious paint, to the moſt unreaſonable matters. It was not now, as heretofore, the refining the knowledge of things that they endeavoured, but Conceptions and Terms. And Diſputation became thereby ſo full of wrangling and animoſity, that it was good for nothing elſe but to heat the Choler, and blacken the Blood of Philoſophers. *Smigleſius* a *Polonian* Jeſuit, was one of the firſt that wrote at the ſame time both moſt ſubtilly and moſt ſolidly on the Logick of *Ariſtotle*. He hath by the Sagacity of his Wit dived into the depth of that Science, with a perſpicuity

perſpicuity and exactneſs, that is hardly to be found elſewhere. His Logick is a lovely piece. The other Modern Philoſophers are more addicted to Natural Philoſophy than Logick: but there is nothing more extravagant, than the Treatiſe which *Van Helmont* hath written on Logick, by his unreaſonable overthrowing all the Principles of *Ariſtotle*. *Deſcartes* began a Logick which is not compleated: Some Fragments thereof have remained in the hands of one of his Scholars, under the Title *of Erudition*. There are ſome Lineaments of Dialectick in his Method, where he ſayeth that the mind of man being limited, it muſt at firſt be buſied about ſimple Objects; then accuſtomed by little and little to the knowledge of compound Objects, and to diſtinguiſh the one from the other. He would have men to diſengage themſelves from prejudices, enter into a thought of doubting of every thing, that they may be able to diſtinguiſh what is true from what is falſe. His firſt Principle, *I think, therefore I am*, which

which he propoſes as the firſt evident and ſenſible truth, if it be narrowly examined, hath in it ſomewhat defective: for the Propoſition, *I think*, being to be reduced to this, *I am thinking*; that is to ſay, *I am, therefore I am*, makes a frivolous ſenſe. But nevertheleſs, as he hath raved the beſt of any of the Moderns, ſo what he hath ſaid, for all its Noveltie is not ill deviſed: And there is found in it a depth of Meditation, which is peculiar to himſelf; yet there is nothing leſs Methodical than his Diſcourſe *concerning Method*. It is a hodge-podge of Morality, Natural Philoſophy, and Metaphyſicks, which eſtabliſhes hardly any thing. However there is to be found in it ſome draughts of Sincerity, which ſhow the true intention of his mind; eſpecially when he moſt ingeniouſly ſays, *That Men gain nothing by Philoſophy but the means to ſpeak probably of every thing, and to make themſelves be admired by the leſs knowing*. The Dialectick of *Campanella* is confuſed and perplexed, being built upon the Platforme of the

the *Averroiſts*, whereof he framed to himſelf too abſtracted a Notion. But to conclude this point; it may be ſaid, that the compleateſt Modern piece of Logick in all its parts, is that which *Peter Mounyer*, a Phiſician of *Grenoble*, hath publiſhed on the Writings of Father *Fabri* a *Jeſuit*. There is nothing more Original than what he hath written, chiefly on the Art of Syllogiſm, and Conſequence. No man hath hitherto carried that Science farther, nor hath more exhauſted that matter by the almoſt Infinite Enumeration of all the modes, and of all the imaginable connexion of terms which conſtitute a Syllogiſm. But let us proceed to Moral Philoſophy, which is ſomewhat leſs obſcure and more real.

The end of the ſecond Part.

Reflexions
ON
Moral Philoſophy.

I.

MORAL Philoſophy teaches the way of living, as Logick the manner of ſpeaking and reaſoning; the one regulates the thoughts, and the other the deſires of the Soul. *Democritus* was the firſt of Philoſophers that thought it ſtrange, that Man who was ignorant of himſelf, amuſed himſelf about the ſtudy of the Heavens. For that was the exerciſe of the Philoſophers before *Socrates*, who began firſt to mind the ordering of his Manners.

He

He had the first notion of it from *Pythagoras*, who applyed himself to Morality whilst he observed Nature. That Science which he learnt from the *Ægyptians*, by the correspondence that he had with their Priests, was not his greatest delight; though it was not altogether indifferent to him. The design of that Moral Philosophy of his aimed at the purifying of the mind, from the impurities of the body and the mists of imagination, by the study of Philosophy, which he called a meditation on death; it was also the most pure and religious, but the least exact of all Moral Philosophies. For it contained only bare Maxims, without order and connexion: and his Maxims were only a plain interpretation of the Worship of the Gods, of the care that is to be had of Parents and Friends, of natural honesty, of modesty, probity, publick interest, and other duties of life. And by the Precepts of so sound Doctrine he formed the manners and minds of the people that heard him. St. *Jerome* saith, that

all

all the Morality of *Pythagoras* is comprehended in his Poem, which is not ſo much to be attributed to him as to his Scholars: we have an abridgment of it in the Commentary of *Hierocles* on that Poem. This *Hierocles* was Governour of *Alexandria* under *Diocleſian*. There is to be found in *Longinus* a hint of the Morality of *Pythagoras*, which gives a great Idea of his Doctrine,

Do always good: and never lye.

And though *Ariſtotle* affirms, that that Philoſopher ſpeaks not ſo well of vertues as *Socrates* did: yet it muſt be granted, ſays *Cicero*, that there appeared a certain Character of Wiſdom in the followers of *Pythagoras*, which ſo diſtinguiſhed them from other Philoſophers, that at *Rome* under the firſt Conſuls, a man paſt for a *Pythagorean* when he had a compoſed meen; and what *Athenæus* reports of the Sobriety of theſe Philoſophers, hath given Antiquity a great admiration for ſo auſtere a Morality.

II. *Socra-*

II.

Socrates gave Principles to the Moral Philoſophy, which *Pythagoras* brought from *Egypt*, and began to reduce it into Method, by the diſtinction which he made of Virtues, and by their Definitions. The other Philoſophers that went before him, ſtudied nature. *Socrates* ſtudied himſelf, by the care he had of cultivating his Soul more than his Reaſon, and of improving his Manners rather than his Wit. He had a wonderful diſpoſition to vertue, for with a profound Capacity, he had a Modeſty and Simplicity that rendred him amiable to all men. That familiar Spirit, which *Apuleius* calls the God of *Socrates*, hath given occaſion of much diſcourſe concerning the Morality of that Philoſopher. *Plato* pretended that it was a kind of inviſible genius that guided him: *Tertullian* and *Lactantius* ſay it was a real demon: *Plutarch* aſſures us that it was a way of ſneezing to the right or left, which ſerved *Socrates* for a good or bad Omen in any thing he undertook. *Maximus*

of

of *Tyre* thinks it was a ſecret inſtinct of his Conſcience, which inclined him to good, and averted him from evil. *Pomponatius* judges that it was only the Planet which ruled in his Nativity. And *Montanus* will have it to have been a ſudden inclination of his Will, and a kind of inſpiration, which ſerved for foreſight to that Philoſopher in ſurpriſes, an intimation in doubts, and a guide in dangers. But without ſo much ado, it is probable that that pretended Spirit of *Socrates*, which ſerved him for a Conductor in his actions, was nothing elſe but the Prudence which he had acquired by his Experience in things, and the Reflexions he made on their Events; wherein he was ſeldom miſtaken. Inſomuch that it hath been believed of him, what *Homer* would have us believe of the great men, of whom he ſpeaks in his Poems; to whom he aſſigned Deities for Guides, in the dangers to which their Valour expoſed them. For in fine, the Morality of *Socrates* was his Demon: and all his Art conſiſted in his Prudence.

He was unjuſtly condemned to death, for want of Religion. His ruine, ſaith *Plutarch*, was an effect of his Piety; and he became only ſuſpected of irreligion, becauſe he would render the Philoſophy of *Pythagoras* purer, by cutting off the Fables and Superſtitions that had ſlipt into it, and which rendred it ridiculous to his diſciples, that he might leave nothing in it but what was reaſonable. In effect *Socrates* had ſo great a veneration for the Gods, ſays *Cicero*, that *Xenophon* having conſulted him, if he ſhould follow *Cyrus: Mans counſel*, ſaid he, *is uncertain, you muſt adviſe with God.* In fine, the Doctrine of *Socrates* was a continual Leſſon to Vertue, whereof the moſt part of other Philoſophers ſpeak only for oſtentation, or policy: that drolling way he made uſe of, was but a method to procure attention. Morality which in its natural auſterity would have been apt to have diſguſted people, invited them under an agreeable appearance: the ſeaſoning which that Philoſopher gave to the dryneſs of his Maxims,

Maxims, made them be much more favourably received of the Publick; yea and thereby he avoided that ſtile of authority and arrogance, which was then in uſe among the Sophiſts, as an odious yoke to Reaſon: and he handled with ſo little ſeriouſneſs the moſt ſerious matters, that he made it one of his Maxims to do ſo, knowing very well that the ſureſt way to perſwade was to pleaſe.

III.

Plato brought Moral Philoſophy ſtill to greater perfection, upon the Model that *Socrates* had left him: For by his Ideas, which he gave to every thing, as the Univerſal Principle of Philoſophy, he raiſed all Vertues to their higheſt perfection. In his *Phedrus* he explains the nature of Moral Philoſophy, the end whereof is to purifie the mind from the errours of imagination, by the reflexions that Philoſophy ſuggeſts to him. However the greateſt part of his Dialogues are but good diſcourſes without principles, but which fail not to hit the mark, and

to inſtruct in their way; for the Morals of that Philoſopher are full of inſtructions, which tend always either to countenance Vertue, or to diſcourage Vice: and that Morality is ſpread in all his diſcourſes, though there be nothing in it extraordinary ſingular. Some pretend that the Metamorphoſis of *Apuleius* his Golden Aſs, is an Allegory of the Moral Philoſophy of *Plato*; the end whereof is to teach that Philoſophy ſerves to purifie the mind, and to purge it from paſſions, and thoſe groſſer ſentiments which make men reſemble beaſts. For my part I believe no ſuch thing: the notions of it are too impure. There reigned in the time of *Plato* at *Athens* a falſe wit, introduced by the Sophiſts, which ſtruck at Manners aſwell as Reaſon. *Protagoras* was a Sophiſt in Diſcourſe, and *Diogenes* in Manners: all his Morality was counterfeit, there was nothing but arrogance in his probity, and oſtentation in his modeſty: he acted the ſevere for envy of *Plato*, whoſe delicateneſs he endeavoured to cenſure, by an affecta-

tion

tion of auſterity. It was only againſt Vertue and Grandure that he played the Philoſopher: he pitied the King of *Perſia* becauſe he was too rich: *Alexander* the Great ſeemed to him unhappy, becauſe he was too powerful: and merit and good fortune put him out of humour. So that the Morality of *Diogenes* muſt needs have been extravagant, having had no other foundation but a clowniſh ſurlineſs: he was a great Hypocrite, and in reality more a Bragadochio than Philoſopher. So that *Plato* by the ſolidity of his Doctrine and Vertue, had no great difficulty to overthrow the erroneous Morality of *Diogenes*, and of the Cynicks, who were the Diſciples of *Antiſthenes*, and of all Philoſophers the moſt open Enemies of modeſty and civility. *Plato* was the firſt that rectified the opinion of the Immortality of the Soul, which *Socrates* learnt of *Pythagoras*, *Pythagoras* of the *Egyptians*, and the *Egyptians* of the *Hebrews*, by the means of *Abraham* whilſt he ſojourned in *Egypt*. He made it likewiſe the moſt impor-

tant principle of Pagan Morality, to oblige men to be vertuous by the hope of reward, and the fear of punishment. But the Doctrine of *Plato* had a tendency to that of the Stoicks; as appears by the example of *Antiochus* of *Ascalon*, who having been bred in the Academy turned Stoick. *Cicero* remarks the reason of it, when he says, that the most part of the Maxims of *Zeno* were drawn from the Doctrine of *Socrates*. *Stoicorum mirabilia Socratica sunt pleraque.*

IV.

Though in the judgment of *Cicero* the Moral Philosophy of *Aristotle* hath the same grounds, the same principles, and the same œconomy as that of *Plato* hath, and that there is no essential difference betwixt them; yet it is to be granted, that *Aristotle* erects a far more methodical Scheme of Doctrine: not only by the notion that he gives of a publick and a private vertue, in distinguishing the prudence of a Soveraign in the conduct of his State, from that of the Master of a Family in the order-

ordering of his Houſhold; but alſo by eſtabliſhing in his Books to *Nicomachus* the two moſt eſſential points in Moral Philoſophy, a laſt End, and the Means to attain it: and in the laſt Book he teaches, that that Beatitude conſiſts in the nobleſt action of man in reference to the moſt excellent Object. This is all the Moral Philoſophy of *Ariſtotle*: the moſt exact, the moſt regular and compleat of all other Moralities. Every thing therein is ranked in ſo good a method, that the chief ground of the deſign, and the parts of it have ſo natural a relation to one another, and tend all in ſo ſtreight a line to their end, that it is one of the moſt accompliſhed Works of Antiquity. For every thing therein is digeſted in that admirable method of *Analyſis*, very familiar to that Author, who by that art reduces the End to the Means, in the ſame manner that the parts are referred to the whole, and the effects to the cauſe. And though in the third Book of his Morals he affirms, that an exact method cannot be obſerved in ſuch a

matter, by reaſon of its natural inſtability, ſeeing it hath for object the actions of men, which are in themſelves ſo mutable: yet he hath obſerved a regularity therein, beyond what can be imagined; and nothing warrants more the Morality of *Ariſtotle*, than the univerſal policy of the world. For there is not at this day any well ſetled form of Government which is not founded on that Moral Philoſophy. And that is alſo the Reaſon that *Machiavel*, who teaches Magiſtrates to rule by crime, cannot endure it, becauſe it is too vertuous. But after all that hath been ſaid, that Moral Philoſophy of *Ariſtotle*, aſwell as that of *Socrates* and *Plato*, can make men only Philoſophers, and are too weak to make them throughly good: For they can only teach man his duty, but not make him in love with it. Neither is it in theſe fair Maxims (though men brag ſo much) that patience in afflictions, and fortitude againſt adverſity is to be found. And when a man has no more but the vertue of a Philoſopher, he has none at all.

V. The

V.

The great Principle of the Morality of *Zeno*, head of the Stoicks, was to live in conformity to Nature; founded on that pretended maxim of the School of *Plato*, *Nulla in re, niſi in natura, quærendum ſummum bonum*: *That the chief good is no-where to be ſought but in Nature.* But ſeeing that maxim favoured ſenſuality too much, and even agreed with the Doctrine of *Antiſthenes*, and the Cynicks, who in their ſentiments were naturally impudent, it offended the moſt part of Philoſophers, and made them revolt and fall off from *Zeno*. That Philoſopher, that he might not diſpleaſe the Publick, put his opinion in a cleaner dreſs, by explaining that conformity to Nature, by a conformity to right Reaſon. The Maſters explanation was variouſly interpreted by his Scholars. *Cleanthes* would have it, to live conformably to that ray which Heaven had imprinted on the mind of man. *Chryſippus* pretended, that it was to live according to the light of Vertue: but both of

of them grounded themſelves on that principle of *Zeno*, that Vertue and Reaſon were circumſcribed by as narrow bounds as Truth: and as whatſoever is contrary to Truth, is alike falſe; ſo whatever is contrary to Reaſon, and Vertue, is equally abſurd and vicious. Every thing moved on that axis in the School of *Zeno*: but the conſequences of ſo extravagant a principle were diſliked by all men: nothing appeared more ridiculous than that equality of ſins, which made all men alike criminal; and nothing ſeemed falſer than that Tranquillity which they founded on an indifferency for external goods and evils. Theſe Maxims begot admiration, when they were only conſidered on the outſide; but they occaſioned laughter, when men pryed more deeply into them. That Kingdom of the wiſe-man, whereof *Zeno* ſpeaks, which rendred the Stoick Maſter of the world, ſo ſoon as he became a Philoſopher, was but chimerical; and that calm of mind which he affected by his inſenſibility to all things, was but a dream.

How

How much agitation might be ſeen through that apparent Serenity? what ſervitude appeared in that imaginary Soveraignty? and how frivolous are all the reaſonings that *Seneca* makes in his Books of Tranquillity and Conſtancy to *Serenus*? For to be ſhort, there was nothing natural nor ſincere in that Philoſophy. All that Vertue had no other principle but Vanity: That external grimace of wiſdom which was taught in the *Porch*, was but a falſe repreſentation of the Soul; it made a man but a machine of Philoſophy: and they preached a height of ſentiments that was ſomewhat ſavage, and bore no proportion to humane infirmity. Theſe fair maxims of conſtancy, moderation, equality, greatneſs of Soul, undauntedneſs, and the like, were but great names, whereby theſe Ape-Sages diſguiſed their pride. It was rather an hypocritical arrogancy, than true honour, that ſwayed their conduct. That Stoick who fills the Books of *Seneca* and *Epictetus*, was a wiſe-man in fanſie, whereof there hath never been ſeen any

any example: and *Plutarch* in one of his Treatiſes againſt *Zeno*, proves that the Morality of that Philoſopher is even more fabulous than the poetical Fictions. Under *Tiberius* men became Stoicks, only that they might put on a ſtedfaſtneſs in diſgrace, and all they got by it was ſome ſentiments hoiſted above Reaſon and Humanity, which made them look demure, and dye with a better meen. That Senatour, of whom *Tacitus* ſpeaks, may be an inſtance of this truth, who turned Stoick upon no other account, but that he might become ſeditious and an incendiary; for which that Sect was very fit: and an unmasked Stoick was an inconſiderable thing. Wherefore *Lipſius*, in my opinion, had no reaſon to have ſo much extolled that Morality, and to have found it ſo conſonant to our Religion: I think there is nothing more oppoſite to it, becauſe it inſpires into men pride and independence: for a Stoick is only humble in his words, that he may be fierce and haughty in his thoughts. That Morality is, in truth,

truth, more ſplendid than any other, becauſe it is full of lofty expreſſions and ſolemn maxims: but there is nothing more ſuperficial than the Vertues it profeſſeth: and in a Stoick every thing, even Modeſty it ſelf, is vain.

VI.

There is nothing more honeſt in appearance, than the Morality of *Epicurus*: it propoſes only for its end the pure pleaſure of mind, and has no other deſign but to guide man unto perfect liberty, by curing his infirmities, and delivering him from his paſſions, that it may make him wiſe. *Epicurus* himſelf was a very able man, who fetched great compaſſes to come to his point, and to diſguiſe appearances: he knew that that ſoft and voluptuous Doctrine, which *Ariſtippus* taught, and which abridged not man of his pleaſures, was highly cenſured by *Plato*, *Xenophon*, and all thoſe who ſtood much upon diſcipline and probity. He himſelf affected ſeverity in his manners, that he might be the more favourably heard: and he concealed his real ſentiments

timents, under ſo frugal a way of living, and ſo prudent a conduct, that *Cicero*, who in many things finds fault with him, could not forbear to praiſe him for that. *Gaſſendus* makes a great Apology for the opinion of that Philoſopher, pretending that the pleaſure wherein he made his happineſs conſiſt, was no more but a ſoveraign tranquillity of the Soul, accompanied with a perfect conſtitution of body. But *Cicero*, *Horace*, *Plutarch*, and almoſt all the Fathers of the Church, ſpeak otherwiſe of it. The truth is, that pleaſure, wherein *Epicurus* placed his chief good, is a great Problem in his Philoſophy. And *Cicero* ſays that the *Epicureans* were wont to complain, that men were always miſtaken in the pleaſure that they ſpeak of, and that they were not rightly underſtood: and that divided the opinion of the Learned, as to the truth of their Doctrine; which by the different ways that *Epicurus* explained himſelf in, had two faces; one lovely and agreeable, and the other ſevere and

and rude. *Epicurus* ſpake ſometimes like a Philoſopher in a grave ſtrain, declaiming againſt voluptuouſneſs; and by and by in a ſofter dialect, and like a ſage Debauchee: he was a voluptuous Politician, who would pleaſe the delicate, without offending the ſevere. There were ſecrets in that School which were not indifferently revealed to every body. *Epicurus* when he ſpake in publick, mentioned nothing but the pure pleaſure of the mind; but when he entertained his Confidents at priviledged times, he altered his ſtile. And here you have all the myſtery of that admirable Doctrine; whereof the expreſſions were innocent, and the opinions criminal: it was a lewd inſide under a fair outſide, civility in words and impudence in actions. Theſe Philoſophers cloaked under an apparent ſtrictneſs an indulgence for themſelves, and all the art of their Morality tended only to hide their irregularity. For they lived ill, though they ſpoke well: and to juſtifie their own conduct, they never found fault with other men; wherein

wherein they were very ingenious. So poliſhed a Morality gave ground to the different ſentiments that Antiquity entertained of them; they paſſed both for vertuous and for debauched. But they who undertake to juſtifie *Epicurus*, are too ſtrongly out-voted, not to be aſhamed to favour him. For not to ſpeak of the primitive Stoicks, who have always declaimed againſt him, there was never any Doctrine more decryed by the Fathers of the Church than his. It is true *Epicurus* had many great vertues, that his Diſciples were diſcreet, faithful, commodious and kind to their friends, and that he himſelf was ſober: but in reality that ſobriety was but a regimen; the weakneſs of his conſtitution obliged him to that circumſpection for his healths ſake, and the moſt important hours of his life were the hours of digeſtion. He had beſides a modeſt air, and that he might purge himſelf of the arrogance of a Philoſopher, he voted often for ignorance againſt the Learned. Yet in the moſt auſtere heads of his Morality,

Morality, there appeared ſome Lineaments of Humanity, that diſcovered the real Sentiments of his Heart. In a Word, howſoever men may colour this Doctrine, by the pleaſure which Reaſon and Honeſty may allow to the moſt ſpeculative Philoſophers; yet there is ſo great enormity in the boldneſs that it takes to baffle Religion, that a good and vertuous man cannot maintain it. And not to rip up any more the injuſtice of *Epicurus*, proved by *Ariſtodemus* in *Plutarch*, of depriving God of Providence; the diſcourſe of *Theon* in the ſame place, to prove that the Pleaſures of the Body are preferable to the Pleaſures of the Mind; what *Diogenes Laertius* reports of his Gallantries, his Miſtreſſes, his Nicety in his Pleaſures, and of the Effeminacy of his Sentiments, are ſufficient Reaſons to render that Doctrine ſuſpected to a true Philoſopher. And *Plutarch* pretends that *Epicurus* by taking Man off from Religion, deprives him of a greater pleaſure, than all the other delights he leaves him. It is no calumny

then to ſay, that that Philoſopher was not over innocent.

VII.

The noiſe that the Morality of *Zeno* and *Epicurus* made at *Athens*, where they were much in vogue, excited the Wits to employ themſelves in that part of Philoſophy more than in any other: that ſtudy grew ſo much in faſhion there, that Natural Philoſophy was neglected; and men buſied themſelves ſo much in finding out the Chief Good that they ſlighted all the reſt. But as every one reaſoned according to his Principles, ſo every one likewiſe ſhaped to himſelf a Beatitude according to his Humour. *Herillus* who loved ſtudy, placed the chief good in Knowledge: *Calliphon* and *Dinomachus* placed it in honeſt and lawful Pleaſure; *Diodorus* in the Abſence of pain: *Theophraſtus* who loved a commodious and eaſie life, thought that Vertue without Fortune would not make a Man happy. Some added to that Health, others Indolency, Beauty, and a good Conſtitution: ſeverals placed Happineſs in Honour,

Honour, Credit, Authority, Reputation, and in the other qualities which might contribute to the ſatisfaction of Body and Mind. It was from that eagerneſs which men had then to form to themſelves a Model of Felicity, wherein every one fancied to himſelf an intereſt above all other concerns, the notions of it multiplyed ſo vaſtly by the multitude of different Spirits who applyed themſelves thereto, that *Varro* reckons up two hundred and fourſcore different Opinions upon the ſole queſtion of the Chief Good; as St. *Auguſtin* in his Book *De civitate Dei* aſſures us; every one purſuing the object to which his humour drew him, that he might make to himſelf a Beatitude according to his own mind. But the Spirit of man is ſo weak in all the Reaſonings that he makes of the Chief Good of his own head, that he cannot conceive but an imperfect notion thereof: for he wanders after the ſhadow, inſtead of the truth which he purſues. It is true, that that Idol of Glory, and Honeſty, which the Pagan

Morality propoſed for an Object, how frivolous ſoever it was, did notwithſtanding ſtir men up to Vertue, and was the firmeſt Foundation it had. That is all that man by the light of nature found reaſonable. From that principle *Panetius* deduced the moſt eſſential parts of the duties of life, for the inſtruction of men. For ſince *Zeno* and *Epicurus* there hath appeared no new model of Morality, whereof any thing remains. The Characters of *Theophraſtus*, the Comedies of *Menander*, *Plautus*, and *Terence*, are indeed fair Leſſons for manners but without Principles. And of all the Moral Philoſophies of *Paganiſm*, that of *Cicero* contained in his *Offices* is the moſt exact; for its maxims are grounded on auſtereſt vertue. The Morality of *Seneca* is not altogether ſo pure; for though his Maxims be moſt lovely, yet they are not always maintained by the ſame Reaſon. *Plutarch* is more real, he teaches vertue in a plainer way, by relating the actions of the vertuous. *Pliny*, for all he was ſo great a Libertine,

tine, hath ſome draughts of Morality in the Prefaces to his Natural Hiſtory, which are of great weight. He ſpeaks always magiſterially, with that loftineſs of expreſſion, that is natural to him. His ſole deſign is to reform manners by his vehement declamations againſt Luxury, Debauchery, and the other Diſorders of his Age; his intention is always good, in praiſing ſincerely what is laudable, and condemning what is otherways. Of all the Stoicks *Epictetus* is the moſt rational; for he is the moſt ſincere, and leaſt head-ſtrong of all. The reſt of Philoſophers who wrote on manners, followed either the Principles of *Ariſtotle*, as *Panetius*, *Cicero* and *Plutarch*, or wrote to little purpoſe.

VIII.

But nothing more diſcompoſed the Heatheniſh Morality, than the Lives of the Primitive Chriſtians. That Doctrine which the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors publiſhed, teaching men to be humble in greatneſs and modeſt in ſucceſs, and that Probity whereof Chri-

ſtianity made Profeſſion, appeared ſo wonderful to them; that in making attempts to imitate the Chriſtians, they fell into extravagancy, by ſtepping beyond their Character, and the bounds of that worldly wiſdom, whereof they followed the maxims. Their vertue degenerated into oſtentation, and they became Braggadochioes, when they could be no longer Sages; and as it is often weakneſs that makes men bold, ſo it was only vanity that made the Pagans become vertuous. The life of *Appollonius* ſo full of Prodigies, was only written by *Philoſtratus*, that he might oppoſe it to the miraculous life of JESUS CHRIST: So likewiſe the lives of the Sophiſts were publiſhed by *Eunapius*, who lived under *Theodoſius* the great; that he might compare them to the lives of the Primitive Believers, and overthrow the belief that men had in their Doctrine. *Vopiſcus* in imitation of *Eunapius* undertook the ſame: and long before them *Epictetus*, who had remitted much of that haughtineſs which he learned from *Zeno*, by

by the Converſation he had with the Chriſtians, gave occaſion to that ſpirit of emulation, which made the Morality of the Stoicks reflouriſh under the Empire of the *Antonines*: For at that time moſt part of Philoſophers became Stoicks, as *Sextus Empiricus* affirms, that they might counterfeit the ſeverity of Chriſtianity by that ſurly gravity which the *Porch* inſpired into them, and which was good for nothing but to puff man up. But however, all other moral Philoſophy appeared very defective in compariſon of Chriſtian morality; which only at length became commendable, by the profeſſion it made of modeſty, diſintereſtedneſs, and ſincerity. For there is none but the Chriſtian Doctrine that teaches man to appear to be what he is, and to be what he appears; becauſe to a Chriſtian whoſe Glory is his Infirmity, it is no ſhame to diſcover his Imperfections. He is that true *Hero*, who has always courage enough to be ſincere, and is never ſo weak as to diſguiſe himſelf. All the Pagan Mo-

rality was overthrown by the first word that JESUS CHRIST uttered in publick; when in his Sermon on the Mount he pronounced, Happy the poor and humble in spirit: because all the Pagan Morality is but Pride, and the Christian, Submission. The one teaches man to be vain, and the other to be modest. And seeing purity of manners and sincerity is only to be found among Christians, it may be affirmed, that there is no real Probity out of Christianity. For the greatest Probity that can be, if it be attacked by an interest as prevalent as is the motive to the vertue whereof it makes Profession, may succumb. It is only to be found in our Religion, wherein the interest of an Eternity, which surpasses all other concerns, can render impregnable the principles that support it. So that out of Christianity there is no true Morality, because there is no real vertue: and every Morality else, besides that of a Christian, is commonly but a kind of policy, and piece of cunning.

IX.

The truth is, Pagan Morality began of

of it ſelf to appear ſo weak for ſupporting the infirmity of man, that it fell altogether into contempt, amongſt thoſe who aſpired to a good life: for beſides that the indifference for pleaſure or pain, for riches or poverty, for glory or ignominy, which *Zeno* taught, is not to be found real but in the Chriſtian Religion; and that that Felicity which Philoſophy endeavoured to find in ſufferings, was only to be found in our Doctrine, all the Vertue of Pagans appeared to thoſe that examined it, but an Art to hide Vices, and a Leſſon of Ignorance; becauſe it teaches man only to fill his mind with falſe Notions of Conſtancy and Stedfaſtneſs, whilſt Chriſtian Philoſophy diſcovers to him his infirmities; and that the one teaches him to follow his deſires, and the other to repreſs them. By the help of that light, and by the knowledge of theſe admirable truths the new Morality of the Goſpel was eſtabliſhed, which made the wiſe change their maxims, and all the earth its countenance: becauſe that Heavenly Doctrine

ctrine of the Law of Grace, wherein God had included the depth of his Wiſdom, having taught man what it behoved him to hate, and what he ought to love; humiliation and poverty became preferable to greatneſs and riches; and the Chriſtian meaſured no more his eſteem and inclinations, but by the Eternity which God propoſed to him for a recompenſe. That was the Morality which the Apoſtles preached, which the Martyrs ſealed with their Blood, which Virgins ſanctified by the Purity of Life, which the Laws authoriſed, and which, in fine, was ſetled in the World by Probity and Reaſon. Amongſt the Fathers who beſt explained that Divine Morality to men, S. *Baſil*, S. *Chryſoſtome*, S. *Jerome*, S. *Ambroſe*, S. *Auguſtin*, S. *Gregory*, S. *Bernard* and *Thomas Aquinas*, obtained greateſt reputation. S. *Baſil* did it as a Spiritual Father, in his aſcetick diſcourſes; S. *Chryſoſtome* as a preacher in his Sermons, and in his Meditations on the Epiſtles of S. *Paul*, where he hath left us one of the perfecteſt

fecteſt Ideas of Morality, which we have in our Religion; and a pattern likewiſe of preaching, which ought to be propoſed to thoſe who are called to that holy Miniſtry: S. *Jerome*, S. *Ambroſe*, and S. *Auguſtin* have done it as Interpreters of the Scripture, and Doctors of the Church; S. *Gregory* as a Philoſopher by his Allegories; S. *Bernard* as a Contemplative, and *Thomas Aquinas* as a Theologue. His *ſecundæ ſecundæ* is the moſt rational, the beſt digeſted, and moſt accurate Morality that hath ever been written. It is indeed the Morality of *Ariſtotle* reduced into the perfecteſt method that it can be. *Javellus* a theologue of the ſame order with *Thomas Aquinas*, hath written the beſt after him on that part of Philoſophy. The work of *Petrarch* upon the divers accidents of life, is a kind of Moral Philoſophy: but ſeeing it is made up but of curious reflexions on Fortune, it is of no uſe for mans conduct. It is true that it is fertile in thoughts, but very barren in Reaſon and Diſcourſe. There is more

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ingeniouſneſs in the Morality of *Bacon*, than in his other works. Every thing therein is well excogitated; but I know not if all be true. The wiſdom of *Cardan* teaches nothing leſs than manners, his notions are empty, which preſcribe no real courſe for the conduct of life; and that knowledge of the World which he promiſes, is but a Morality of oſtentation and no-ways of practice. *Deſcartes* in his method hath but one or two principles of Morality; Natural Philoſophy was his predominant paſſion. I wave an infinite number of other Authors, who have ſucceeded in this kind of writing, eſpecially the *Italians* and *Spaniards*, who are pleaſed to moralize more than other people, as appears by their ſpiritual Fathers, who are the moſt famous.

X.

To conclude, we have ſeen in theſe laſt Ages Moralities, whoſe maxims were admirable, and their principles notwithſtanding horrid. Men ſuffer themſelves to be miſled by theſe fair appearances, becauſe they examine not the

the grounds of them; and blindly follow thoſe maxims, without informing themſelves of the principles thereof. The pureſt Morality cannot be true, if it be not founded on a ſound and Orthodox Faith; ſuch as is that of the Univerſal Church, to which men ſhould adhere, and firmly relye on. But it is a matter much to be lamented, That that Morality, which might be ſo ready a relief to Chriſtians in their afflictions, becomes to them almoſt uſeleſs when they ſtand in need of it, through the Ignorance in which they live, of the Holy Inſtructions of ſo ſaving a Philoſophy; That ſo neceſſary a remedy turns fruitleſs through the levity of our minds, which in vain ſeek after Humane Conſolations; and through a Natural Curioſity which puts out the heavenly light within us, and fills our ſouls with extreme darkneſs. Happy is that Chriſtian who being perſwaded of his Religion, knows no other Philoſophy but the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of true Wiſdom. But that once for all we may undeceive our ſelves

ſelves of the Vanity of all Humane Knowledge: let us labour to conceive how cold are all the conſolations of Pagan Morality to a man abandoned of all the World, after that he hath been adored therein, ſuch as we have ſeen in this Age; and how comfortable to a man in affliction is the Morality of our Religion, though it ſhould only ſerve to redouble his Faith in the Agony of Tribulation, by teaching him that affliction is a favour, and that temporal pain is the aſſurance of a Joy and Reward that ſhall never have an end. In this it is properly that the Chief Good, which Pagan Philoſophy in vain ſought after, does conſiſt, which can only be the fruit of the pure and holy Chriſtian Religion: but nothing denotes ſo much the weakneſs of man, as to know that Chief Good, and not to love it; to have reaſon and want ſtrength to follow it; and to be always endeavouring to perſwade, but never able to convince himſelf.

The end of the third Part.

Reflexions

ON

Natural Philoſophy.

I.

I Very well conceive that man may frame to himſelf principles of Logick and Moral Philoſophy, becauſe reaſoning, and manners, which are the object of theſe two Sciences, are the work of man: but I cannot conceive how he dares form principles of Natural Philoſophy, whereof Nature is the object, and that the Work of God. In effect what means have we to know the deſign of the Creator, who many times have not underſtanding enough to know the deſigns of the Creature? Did God adviſe

adviſe with you, when he ſuſpended in the air the Foundations of the Earth, to frame an Univerſe? And which of the Philoſophers hath ſounded that eternal wiſdom, which was before all things, that he might diſcover the depth of his thoughts. St. *Auguſtin* ſaith, that the World is a great Theatre, where the Art of him that made it ſhines forth on all hands: But is it not rather a great Riddle which the Philoſophers have eſſayed to explain without being able to ſucceed in it. It is true there have been minds ſufficiently qualified, to know the effects of nature by examining their cauſes: But never was there any as yet capable, to ſee into the intentions of the Creatour, and to diſcover the hidden ſecrets of his art, by knowing the principles of this great work. For if the ſmalleſt Creatures that are within the reach of our ſenſes, and which we have ſo long ſtudied, have ſomething that is incomprehenſible: If the ſmalleſt Herbs of the Fields have qualities unknown to man: Shall we be ſo vain as to pretend to know

know the vertue of thoſe great Machins which compoſe the World, and to aſcend to the ſource of all the Wonders that we admire therein. Let us not deceive our ſelves: Nature hath her myſteries; ſhe attains her ends by wayes that we are ignorant of: And ſince men have applied themſelves to the knowledge of her Secrets, there hath been ſo little of certainty diſcovered, that one would think nothing ſhould more bring down the pride of man, than the ſtudy of Natural Philoſophy. It is an abſtruſe and profound Science, wherein there is little agreed upon amongſt men: thoſe that have ſpoken of it beſt, have as yet ſaid nothing to the purpoſe: So therefore let us not beat our Brains to imagine new Syſtemes. That matter hath already paſſed through ſo many heads, that if there had been any better than what we know, it would have been found out: And indeed, after ſo much thinking on it, it is even wiſdom to mind it no more; and to content our ſelves by an humble acknowledgment of

our own ignorance, to admire the depth of the knowledge of God. It is true, there is nothing ſo capable, fully to ſatisfie the mind of man, as the conſideration of Nature, and Natural Beings; no other Science tickles ſo much our curioſity. Happy is he that can know any thing thereof; but Nature ſhows her ſelf to us only by her out-ſide. The knowledge that we have of her is but ſuperficial, and God Almighty to puniſh our Pride, takes pleaſure to abandon us to our curioſity, as to a chaſtiſement; becauſe by inſpiring into us a deſire to know all things, he reduces us to the paſs of being ignorant of all, and even of our ſelves.

II.

But by how much that Science is vain through the obſcurity and uncertainty of the matters it treats of, by ſo much it is frivolous through the Diverſity of Opinions, that are to be found in the ſentiments of the greateſt men who ſtudied it; for all the Ancient Philoſophy hath hardly as yet been able to eſtabliſh any Principle that is agreed upon.

upon. *Thales* makes Water the principle of all things. *Heraclitus* pretends that it is Fire; *Anaximenes* will have it to be the Air; *Pythagoras* maintains they are numbers; *Democritus* Atomes, *Muſæus* Unity, *Parmenides Infinitum*, or Infinitude. And in ſo profound an obſcurity of Natural Beings, and among ſo many different ſentiments one cannot be ſure of any thing. *Protagoras* thinks that what appears true to every one ſeverally, is true in effect. *Ariſtippus* will have nothing true but what one perceives by an internal perſwaſion of mind. *Chryſippus* ſays, that the ſenſes are continual impoſtours. *Lucretius* aſſures us that they never are. *Picus Mirandola* in the examination that he hath made of the Doctrine of the Pagans, *Ludovicus Vives* in his Book of the Corruption of Arts, *Poſſevin* in the third Book of his Bibliotheck, are eloquent upon the uncertainty of the Judgments of Men: in effect there is nothing more certain than that, nor freer from diſpute. It is not, that one

ought to doubt of every thing; but we ſhould not at leaſt too eaſily believe theſe Philoſophers, who propoſe to us daily new principles of Natural Philoſophy. Let us examine them before we believe them: let us diſtinguiſh what is probable in their Doctrine from what is true, and not ſuffer our ſelves to be ſurprized by their Conjectures. Let us admit of no Syſtemes, but upon the terms that *Ptolomy* propoſed his, which he deſired ſhould paſs for an Opinion, without pretending that men ſhould believe it on his Authority, before that he proved his Reaſons. And in truth one is very ridiculous, when he ſpeaks not modeſtly on this matter, whereof there is ſcarcely any thing known. *Lucretius* for all he is ſo preſumptious in the Judgments that he makes on Nature, confeſſes that he knows not the Principles thereof. It may be ſaid then in general, that the Primitive Philoſophers by giving their principles, have only pretended to give their conjectures; for Nature ſhews her ſelf hardly to any man. It is true, the Inviſible Power,

Power of its Vertue may be known by the viſible effects of its Operations. But what Eye is ſo ſharp as to penetrate to the ſource of its Intentions, and to unfold the Deſigns thereof? Let us therefore only conſider the Principles which Naturaliſts propoſe to us, as Explications which may be made on what paſſes in Nature, and not as Laws that they impoſe upon her. Let us look upon the Numbers of *Pythagoras*, the Atoms of *Democritus*, the Plenitude and Vacuity of *Leucippus*, the Ideas of *Plato*, the Matter and Form of *Ariſtotle*, the *Vortices* and Corpuſcles of *Deſcartes*, which theſe great men propoſe for the Principles of their Natural Philoſophy, as Conjectures to be examined, and not as Rules to be followed. Let us even liſten more favourably to thoſe who give the beſt Reaſon for every thing, becauſe they have had the wit to rank their Imaginations in better order: But let us not think them ſuch Fools, as to have been willing to vent for Science, what is but Opinion, and to make current for

Truth, what is but Probability. It is a Caution that one cannot take too much to make him walk diſcreetly in ſo obſcure a Path as that of Natural Philoſophy, the ways whereof are uncertain. For as a falſe Rule makes a whole Building irregular; ſo in the ſame manner a falſe Principle renders the whole Platform of Natural Philoſophy defective.

III.

What courſe is then to be taken in ſo great an uncertainty, and what guide may one follow in ſo difficult a way? *Plutarch* in the ſecond Volume of his Opuſcles, reckons up the different Opinions of the ancient Philoſophers concerning Natural Philoſophy, to a pretty conſiderable number, as *Cicero* had done before in his Academicks: and both adhere to the ſentiment of *Ariſtotle*, which after examination of all they prefer to the reſt: wherein they were followed by *Galen*, and all the ſolid wits that have been ſince. So that ye have at firſt great Suffrages for *Ariſtotle*: For what can

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be more advantageous for that Philoſopher, than the teſtimony of theſe great men; who have been all three particularly conſiderable, for the ſolidity of their judgment, and the accurateneſs of their Criticks. That judgment which they made of *Ariſtotle*, hath been followed by all thoſe who in the following Ages applyed themſelves to the diſcerning of the capacity of that profound Genius. S. *Jerom* ſaith that the mind of that Philoſopher hath been a kind of Prodigie of Nature, who knew all that man is naturally capable to know. And *Medina* a *Spaniſh* Divine, pretends that the capacity of the Spirit of man cannot dive into the knowledge of Nature, as *Ariſtotle* did, without the particular aſſiſtance of a good or bad Angel. It is true, that beſides that that Philoſopher hath reported all that hath been ſaid in Natural Philoſophy before himſelf, to approve or to refute it; there is nothing almoſt ſince to be found in that Science which is rational, that hath not paſſed the tryal of his thoughts, and

whereof he hath not conceived the Principles. But ſeeing men never almoſt ſtudy him by themſelves, or that he is not well underſtood by them; there are a kind of good people, who take ſometimes that which he refutes, for the thing he approves; and that which he approves for what he refutes. This occaſions contradictions in his Followers, who to warrant themſelves by his authority, make him incline to their ſide, whether he will or not: and ſo it is no wonder if themſelves be loſt, when they have put their Guide out of the way.

IV.

But let us not be dazled with the luſtre of the high reputation of that Philoſopher; let us neither liſten to the Voice of all Ages, nor to the Votes of all the Learned that have ſpoken in his favour; let us trye *Ariſtotle* by himſelf, let us ſee in what manner he hath handled that Science of Natural Philoſophy, which is the moſt common Rock on which all Philoſophers ſplit: and that we may not be ſurprized, let

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us begin to judge of his Doctrine by his Principles, that we may be the more equitable in our ſentence. As he had a Wit beyond the common rate of men, ſo he followed extraordinary methods. He begins by a kind of Hiſtory of the Opinions of all the Philoſophers that went before him; and that he might furniſh his thoughts with matter, and ſay nothing but what he himſelf was fully informed of, he is willing to know all that others have ſaid on the ſame ſubject. And inſtead of going into forraign Countreys to converſe with the Learned, as *Plato* did into *Egypt*, *Perſia* and *Italy*, there to ſtudy their ſentiments: *Ariſtotle* ſhut himſelf up in his Cloſet, that he might examine in private all that was written on Natural Philoſophy, and upon that examination eſtabliſh his Opinion, rejecting what made againſt him, and making uſe of what he found for his turn. This was his firſt method. He affirms nothing but what he was ſure of, by the perfect knowledge he had of

of the Opinions of their Philoſophers. His Phyſicks are an abridgment of the Natural Philoſophy of *Pythagoras*, *Ocellus*, *Timæus*, *Leucippus*, *Parmenides*, *Hippocrates*, *Meliſſus*, *Democritus*, and of others that went before him. The moſt part of Philoſophers ſpeak at random what they think fit; *Ariſtotle* alone dives into his matter, prepares it by overthrowing that which choaks his Opinion, and lays down nothing, till he hath firſt refuted that which is contrary to his Doctrine, and therein conſiſted his chief Talent. That is the method which he takes to eſtabliſh his Principles. For having overthrown the Opinion of *Parmenides* and *Meliſſus*, who eſtabliſhed an immoveable and infinite being for the Principle of all things; having made appear the abſurdity of the ſentiment of *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Anaxagoras*, and the other Philoſophers; he lays down his Opinion of three Principles, Matter Form and Privation, as the moſt proper method to illuſtrate the alteration

tion which happens in Generation; wherein men always conceive ſomething that receives, and ſomething which is received, that is to ſay, a ſubject common to the Form which comes a-new, and to that which goes away: and that is ſo true, that without it a new production cannot be conceived. *Plato*, who admits the ſame Principles as *Ariſtotle* doth, diſtinguiſhes not Privation from Matter as he doth, who is the Author of that diſtinction, and brags of it as his own Invention. That made him ſay in the laſt Chapter of his firſt Book of Phyſicks, that moſt part of the errours of Ancient Philoſophy proceeded from this, that the firſt Philoſophers had not framed a diſtinct enough Idea of Matter and Privation: and that which he calls Form, is nothing elſe but the principle of the diſpoſitions, qualities and operations of every compound being; and which conſtitutes every thing in its eſſence making it to be what it is: ſo that taking theſe three Principles of *Ariſtotle* as a proper method to give a Notion

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of what occurs in all the mutations that happen in Nature, and to facilitate the knowledge which men ought to have thereof, they are preferable to the principles of all the other Philoſophers. And this is an abridgment of his general Phyſicks.

V.

In the firſt Book, he lays down the method that he propoſes to himſelf in his deſign; and ſeeing the knowledge of Nature is in it ſelf obſcure, he pretends that men ſhould raiſe themſelves as by ſteps to clear and evident notions, from ſuch as are not ſo; and that in that Science we muſt deſcend from generals to particulars. He adds that in that manner all things become clear in becoming ſenſible by their particular accidents and circumſtances. Having eſtabliſhed that method, in the reſt of that Book he refutes the principles of other Philoſophers to confirm his own. In the ſecond Book he examines what Nature is, and inquires into the proper ſignification of that terme. In the ſecond, third, fourth and fifth Books he

treats

treats of Cauſes, of Motion, and of Place, which are the attributes of a Natural Body. In the ſixth Book he explains Quantity, whereof he makes an exact Treatiſe; he begins to give an Idea of the firſt Mover in the ſeventh Book: and in the eighth he ſpeaks of Time which is the natural meaſure of Motion. In the firſt and ſecond Books of the Heavens he deſcribes the Stars, the matter whereof they are formed, their Qualities, Motion, Scituation, Figure, and all that concerns the conſtruction of the World: and in the third and fourth he treats of the Gravity and Levity of Celeſtial Bodies, and of the different Opinions that the Ancients entertained thereof: and there he diſcourſes likewiſe of the Elements and their Qualities. In the firſt Book of the *Meteors* he explains all that happens in the Air: in the third and fourth, what occurs in the Earth and Sea; where he likewiſe treats of Winds, Thunder, Lightning, Exhalations, Thunder-bolts, the Rain-bow, Falſe-ſuns or Parelies: and in the fourth he

he ſpeaks of Heat and Cold, of Siccity and Humidity, of Putrefaction, of Salts, of the different qualities of mixt bodies, of their mixture and temperament. In the three Books of the Soul, he explains its nature, and the operations thereof, aſwell by the external ſenſes, as by the internal faculties. In the Books of his little natural queſtions he obſerves particularly all that concerns ſenſation, memory, reminiſcence, ſleeping, waking, dreams, the prognoſtick of dreams, the motion of Animals, their progreſſion, the length and ſhortneſs of life, old age, youth, reſpiration, ſickneſs and health. The Hiſtory of Animals is his Maſterpiece, and the compleateſt of his Phyſicks; in the four firſt he hath included the different kinds of Animals, and in the five laſt he hath hinted at their divers manners of multiplication: he hath enriched that work with an infinite number of Experiments, and curious Queſtions, where one may find, if he narrowly obſerve, the firſt hints of the moſt part of the new diſcoveries, whereof modern Philoſophy

loſophy boaſts. I wave his Book of Colours, his Treatiſe of Phyſiognomy, his mechanical Queſtions, his Problems, the two Books of Generation and Corruption, the Book of the World, which he compoſed for *Alexander*, and many other Subjects which he hath handled, wherein he rendred a Reaſon of every thing from the greateſt to the leaſt, as *Diogenes Laertius* obſerves. This makes me ſay for Concluſion, that his Natural Philoſophy is the moſt ample that ever was; and that there has nothing eſcaped that vaſt mind, whoſe profound capacity and comprehenſive genius hath fathomed all things.

VI.

And ſo much may be ſaid in favour of *Ariſtotle*: Let us now ſee what may be found amiſs in him. There is a great deal of confuſion in that Treatiſe of his eight Books of Phyſicks: The connexion is no-ways natural; there is nothing harder to be underſtood than the firſt Matter, and the eduction of Forms out of that Matter: the whole treatiſe of Motion is abſtracted; the eternity

ternity of Motion which in his eighth Book he pretends to prove by circulation is incomprehenſible, and all that Book is too metaphyſical. The Treatiſe of Time and Place is not purely phyſical, ſeeing it can quadrate to Spirits. What he ſays of Time is borrowed from *Archytas*, as that which he ſpeaks of Motion is taken from *Ocellus*, and what he ſays of Vacuity from *Timæus*, as *Patricius* has obſerved. What he affirms in the two firſt Books of the Heavens, in the Treatiſes of Comets, the Rain-bow, and of ſome other Meteors, is not found to be true in all its Circumſtances: Yet the fourth Book of Meteors is to be excepted, which ſeemeth to be more exact than the reſt. The Scituation, which in the third Book of the Heavens he hath given to the ſphere of Elementary Fire, conform to the Opinion of *Leucippus* and *Democritus*, has not any Foundation: *Pythagoras* was not of that opinion. In his ſecond Book of Meteors he pretends that the Earth under the Equinoctial cannot be inhabited: which Experience proves

proves to be falſe. But what he teaches of the eternity of the World, how falſly ſoever, is ſtill more pardonable than the reſt. He could not conceive the Creator but in the way that we conceive the Sun, which produces light at the very inſtant that it begins to be: and from thence there may be even great advantage drawn againſt the *Arrians*, who could not comprehend the Word but with ſome kind of poſteriority to his Principle. So that the Errour of *Ariſtotle* might have furniſhed Reaſons to rectifie the *Arrians*, who perhaps would not have loſt their way, if they had liſtned to the Argument of that Pagan, although he was out of the way himſelf. *Patricius* a Philoſopher of *Venice*, in his Book of the Diſcuſſions of the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle*; *Ramus* in his Phyſical Schools, *Gaſſendus* in his Obſervations againſt the Peripateticks, relate a great many things in Natural Philoſophy, wherein that Philoſopher has been miſtaken, eſpecially in the order and conſtruction of Celeſtial Bodies, in the Hiſtory of Animals,

in the Anatomy of the Body of man, and in ſome other matters. I grant the modern Natural Philoſophy is ſo improved by Experiments, and by the help of new Inſtruments, whereof it makes uſe, that it hath ſurpaſſed the Phyſicks of *Ariſtotle* in ſome things, which have been more clearly diſcovered in the progreſs of time: and that the moſt part of the Opinions of ancient Philoſophers, contained in the ſecond Tome of the Works of *Plutarch*, concerning the Heavens and Stars, are found falſe by Inſtruments proper for Celeſtial Obſervations, that have been invented in theſe laſt Ages. In fine, I grant that *Ariſtotle* is leſs demonſtrative in his Phyſicks, than in the other parts of his Philoſophy, that his method is not ſo exact, nor his principles ſo ſure. But that defect is more to be imputed to the matter, than to the capacity of the Workman, which ſhows it ſelf always equally vigorous in all his Reaſonings and Reflexions. Reaſon it ſelf for all it is ſo univerſal, yet is limited in ſome Subjects: and one cannot tranſ-

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greſs thoſe limits, but that he goes too far.

VII.

This is the judgment that may be made of all the Philoſophers, whether ancient or modern, who have written on Natural Philoſophy. The *Egyptians* have left nothing on this Science, whereof there remains any trace, but their Obſervations on the Heavens and Celeſtial Bodies; which they underſtood better than other people, becauſe the quality of their ſpirits born to Prognoſticks, inclined them more to it. *Simplicius* ſays that *Caliſthenes*, at the deſire of *Ariſtotle* his Kinſman, ſent into *Greece* Obſervations on the Heavens, made by the *Chaldeans*, for above two thouſand years before *Alexander*. *Porphyrie* aſſures us, that he ſaw theſe Obſervations. What the *Phenicians* and *Æthiopians* wrote on Natural Philoſophy is loſt, by the loſs of the Books of *Diodorus* the *Sicilian*, from the fifth to the eleventh. However the *Grecians*, who have been the Maſters in all other Sciences, have been likewiſe in this, whereon

they have written better than other people, and have been the firſt obſervers of Nature. For *Plutarch* in the Life of *Nicias* ſaith, that *Anaxagoras* and the other Philoſophers of *Ionia* of that time were only Naturaliſts. To ſpeak properly, the *Aſſyrians* underſtood no more but the firſt Elements of Aſtronomy, by the unexact Obſervations which they made without Inſtruments; having no other way to meaſure the motions of the Stars but by water-Glaſſes. Amongſt the *Grecian* Philoſophers *Pythagoras*, and *Ocellus*, *Architas*, *Timæus*, who were his Diſciples, *Hippocrates*, *Leucippus*, and *Democritus* ſtudied Nature, and wrote thereon more learnedly than others. *Democritus* is one of the greateſt Naturaliſts that ever was; to whom *Aulus Gellius* gives many Elogies. *Empedocles* compoſed a Natural Philoſophy in Verſe, according to the Principles of *Pythagoras*, of which *Lucretius* ſpeaks as of a miracle, and whereof *Ariſtotle* and *Diogenes Laertius* make mention. *Plato* hath written hardly any thing on this part,

part, which he hath not taken from the *Pythagoreans*. The Opinion of *Democritus*, which had many Followers before and after *Ariſtotle*, and which is revived by moſt part of the modern Natural Philoſophers of note, is ſomewhat more real and ſenſible by the Doctrine of Atoms, than the Opinion of *Ariſtotle* of Matter, Form, and Privation: but beſides that it eſtabliſhes a Matter, without eſtabliſhing a Workman, that is to ſay, an Art without an Artiſt; that Doctrine which is much the ſame with that of *Leucippus*, falls into ſo great abſurdities when it is examined to the bottom, that one hath much ado not to reject it. *Socrates* who found that the *Sophiſts* had abuſed that part of Philoſophy by their falſe argumentations, took another way and applyed himſelf to Morality. So that what *Plato* brings him in ſaying of Natural Things, is none of his, as *Xenophon* alledges. The Book of *Theophraſtus* on Plants, is in the judgment of *Julius Scaliger*, who hath commented on it, one of the lovelieſt pieces of

Natural Philoſophy, that is to be found in all Antiquity. *Zeno* the head of the *Stoicks* hath nothing particular in his Phyſicks, but that he explains not himſelf as others do; though his ſentiments be the ſame. He eſtabliſhes two Principles, God and Matter: He aſſigns to the World a Soul ſo diffuſed in all the parts thereof, that he makes it a great Animal. *Lipſius* hath abridged the Phyſicks of this Philoſopher, as he hath his Morals. *Epicurus* is uncertain in his Phyſicks: he takes a ſingular way of his own in all things. *Cicero* thinks that this Philoſopher, having addicted himſelf to *Democritus*, hath ſpoiled his Opinion by what he hath changed in it: he taught Natural Philoſophy only to ſecure himſelf againſt the fears which Religion occaſions. Vacuity and Atoms are the principles of his Phyſicks. The *Epicureans* little underſtood the nature of Motion, becauſe they no ways underſtood the nature of Time and Place, whereof the explication belongs to the Metaphyſicks. Notwithſtanding of that, *Lucretius* hath preferred *Epicurus* to

to all the other Philoſophers, and hath ſet him off for the greateſt man that ever was: as appears by the Elogies which he makes of him in divers places of his Poem; and eſpecially in the beginning of his third Book, where he ſpeaks of him in a ſtrain, wherein never man was ſpoken of. *Amafanius*, of whom *Cicero* makes mention, maintains nothing different from *Epicurus*, whoſe Doctrine he deſcribes. *Plutarch* cites a Book of Nature and Natural Beings, compoſed by *Chryſippus*, which *Favorinus* praiſeth much. What remains of the Works of Natural Philoſophy written by the *Greeks*, is to be found by ſhreds in the Fragments of *Diogenes Laertius*. We are promiſed from *Florence* a Work, whoſe Author named *Rucelai*, hath collected all that the Ancients have written on that Science; and which he reduced to ſix and thirty different Syſtems of Natural Philoſophy: But ſeeing that Work which he hath written in *Italian*, and which contains twelve Volumes, could not come to light before his death, it is to be feared

that it will not yet appear ſo ſoon, by reaſon of the loſs that Learning hath ſuſtained by the death of Cardinal *de Medicis*, who alone might have haſtened the impreſſion.

VIII.

Though the *Romans* have not much applyed themſelves to Natural Philoſophy, the honour of which they ought wholly to yield to the *Greeks*; yet there are to be found amongſt them learned Works on that ſubject. There hath been nothing written in *Latine*, in a more poliſhed and purer ſtile, than the Poem of *Lucretius* on the Philoſophy of *Epicurus*; which for the purity of diction *Lambinus* prefers to *Virgil*: but there is no piece more dangerous for Morality. *Cicero*, who underſtood the Philoſophy of the *Grecians*, and wrote of it the beſt of all the *Romans*, ſpeaks thereof in ſuch a manner, that one cannot tell what opinion he was of: when we take him upright, we find that he addicts himſelf to nothing, and that he diverts himſelf with every thing: but in fine, it is known that

that *Plato* and *Ariſtotle* pleaſe him better than the reſt. *Seneca*, it ſeems, hath not well obſerved a Didactick way in his Books of Natural Queſtions; he makes too ſubtle Reflexions, where natural ſimplicity is only neceſſary: he affects too much to be moral, where he ſhould only be natural. No man hath written more in *Latine* on Natural Philoſophy, nor with greater elegancy, than *Pliny*: the ſole Idea of his Work is the vaſteſt deſign that ever entred into the mind of man. He is the univerſal Hiſtorian of Nature, who hath given his opinion of every thing, and well; he hath pickt up a thouſand things, that without him would have been loſt. But if we conſult the ſentiment of *Salmaſius* in his Obſervations on *Pliny*, we ſhall find that that Author hath many times ſuffered himſelf to be deceived by thoſe who furniſhed him with the Memorials of his Hiſtory; that he hath ſometimes loſt the way himſelf, by aſſaying to go too far; that he hath been too credulous in following the Opinions of others

others, and too hasty to follow his own; that in his Relations he takes sometimes greater care of the beauty of words, than the verity of things; and that the necessity that he found himself in of relying on the credit of others, makes his own to be questioned. Not but that he hath had Patrons in these last Ages, who pretend that most part of the matters which he published, and whereof men heretofore doubted, are found after strict examination to be true. Yet I think we ought to trust more to *Salmasius* than to those others, who hath written more learnedly on *Pliny* than all that have gone before him; and it must be acknowledged, that the work of *Pliny* is too large to be very exact. However his History is one of the most admirable works of antiquity. *Plutarch*, *Dioscorides*, *Elianus* and *Solinus*, every one of them in their own way have by their Books likewise much enriched Natural Philosophy: *Plutarch* is more a Moralist than Naturalist, *Dioscorides* more Physitian than Philosopher, *Elianus*

lianus a better Hiſtorian than Naturaliſt, and *Solinus* a greater Geographer than obſerver of Nature. *Galen* hath built upon the Natural Philoſophy of *Hippocrates* whom he followed exactly, and hath taken many things from *Pliny*, whoſe Natural Hiſtory he ſtudied much. All the other learned of the following ages have divided themſelves according to the inclination they have had for *Plato*, or for *Ariſtotle*; as *Avicenna* and *Averroes* have done: and that was likewiſe the party which the Schoolmen embraced in the Ages wherein their Sect hath flouriſhed moſt. But moſt of them have ſtuck to *Ariſtotle*, notwithſtanding of the Animoſity and Jealouſies that ſet them together by the Ears. The Schools with all the Arrogance which they inſpired into their Diſciples, have not been ſo bold for the ſpace of three hundred years, as to teach any thing in Natural Philoſophy, which was not conform to the ſentiments of *Ariſtotle*.

IX.

The Modern Natural Philoſophy began

began not to be formed, until the laſt age. *Galileus* a Florentine Philoſopher was the firſt that conceived ſuch a deſign, upon the notion that he had of the Principles of *Leucippus*. He was a man of ſolid wit, who by the perfect knowledge he had of Aſtronomy and Geometry, hath reaſoned better on the nature of Motion, than thoſe that went before him or followed after. He was the firſt that found out the proportion of the vibrations of ſuſpended weights, and of the acceleration of the motion of heavy bodies in falling, whereof he took the principles from *Ariſtotle*. He was more a Peripatetick than his Succeſſors: but in reforming the Ancients he hath taken too modern an Air. For he follows the Opinion of *Copernicus* in the Syſteme of the World, which he hath reformed: and by the uſe of the Teleſcope, he diſcovered many new Stars, he obſerved ſpots in the Sun, he found Mountains and Vallies in the Moon, he obſerved waxings and waneings in the Planet *Venus*, he ſhewed great ſtrength

ſtrength in his reaſonings, and acquired ſingular Reputation in *Italy*, where he was in a manner the founder of Modern Philoſophy. Thus did *Bacon* awaken the love of Philoſophy in his Country. He had a vaſt genius for Natural Philoſophy, but hath in no part which he treated of it, better ſucceeded, than in his Hiſtory of Winds: though he hath been a little too credulous as to the memorials which were furniſhed him on that ſubject. The reſt of his Natural Philoſophy is not of the ſame force; though the Character of his Wit appear therein in all its features: and what he hath written on Nature hath not contributed a little to excite the minds of his Country-men to the love of that Science, and to the ſtudy of natural beings, which of late has reflouriſhed in *England*; where he hath found many imitators of the paſſion he had for Philoſophy. The Phyſicks of *Campanella*, wherein he gives ſenſation to the moſt inſenſible things of nature, whereof he proves all the parts to be animated, is a Viſion

to

to which he was ſubject. *Teleſius* is of his opinion in his treatiſe againſt *Galen*. He is too bold in his deciſions, he treats *Ariſtotle* often very highly, but without reaſon. *Gilbertus* hath explained the Experiments of the Loadſtone better than any other. *Harvey* has reaſoned the beſt on the progreſs of the generation of Animals, and the circulation of the Blood, as *Fromond* hath written the beſt of Meteors, *Savot* of Colours, *Merſennus* of Sounds and Harmony, *Willis* of the Brain and its parts, *Grew* of the Anatomy of Plants. *Floid* hath little ſound Reaſon: and he might paſs for the *Paracelſus* of Philoſophers, as *Paracelſus* for the *Floid* of Phyſicians; for they are two Spirits much like one another. *Gaſſendus* hath written well againſt the Natural Philoſophy of *Floid*. *Borellus* is a good Geometrician, and no bad Naturaliſt, but without any principle of Metaphyſick, which makes him not very ſure in his Propoſitions. *Thomas Hobbes* hath ſhewed a great depth of wit in his Phyſicks; but as he is one of the boldeſt *Epicureans* of theſe laſt

laſt Ages, and follows in every thing the principles of *Epicurus*, without any reſerve; ſo hath he reaſoned ill about the Mind and its chief Operations, the principle of which he attributes to Phantaſms, and the Imagination. *Boile* is a rational perſon, who hath applyed himſelf to the enriching of Natural Philoſophy by his Experiments and Reflexions, which have always an air of ſolidity. *Gaſſendus* is but the Reſtorer of the Phyſicks of *Epicurus*; which he hath handled by *Galileus* his principles of Motion, wherein he is altogether *Galileiſt*; and for the reſt an *Epicurean* mitigated by a principle of Conſcience: for he acknowledges the creation of Atoms, which *Epicurus* denys; he will have God to give them the Motion, Extenſion and Figure, which *Epicurus* aſcribes to themſelves: he admits of Providence, which that Philoſopher allowed not. In fine, he makes *Epicurus* an honeſt man, becauſe he is ſo himſelf: but never man hath treated *Ariſtotle* worſe, whom he calls ignorant, fool, and

and fancyful, for all he was himſelf ſo moderate. As to *Vanhelmont*, who can find nothing rational in *Ariſtotle*'s Phyſicks, it muſt be acknowledged his judgment is not great: the truth is *Paracelſus* had infected his Wit.

X.

Now after all, that we may do juſtice to our Nation, and to the Memorie of *Deſcartes*, we muſt acknowledge that his Natural Philoſophy is one of the moſt learned and accompliſhed pieces of Modern Phyſicks: In it there are curious Idea's, and quaint Imaginations: and if one mind it well, there is to be found therein a more regular Doctrine, than in *Galilæus* or the *Engliſh*; and even more novelty and invention than in *Gaſſendus* himſelf. In a word, it is a Work whereof the order is well excogitated: his Method is altogether Geometrical, which leads from principles to principles, and from propoſitions to propoſitions. However this is to be found fault with in him; That he ſettles for the principle of a Natural Body, motion, figure and extenſion,

tenſion, which are much the ſame with the Principles of *Democritus* and *Epicurus*: Whereupon it is ſaid, That Father *Merſenne*, who was his Reſident at *Paris*, having one day given out in an Aſſembly of the Learned, That Monſieur *Deſcartes*, who had gained Reputation by his Geometrie, was projecting a method of Natural Philoſophy, wherein he admitted Vacuity; that project was hiſſed at by *Robertval* and ſome others, who from thenceforwards thought it would prove no great atchievement. Father *Merſenne* wrote to him that Vacuity was not then a-la-mode at *Paris*: which obliged *Deſcartes* to deviſe meaſures to keep in good terms with the new Naturaliſts, whoſe ſuffrage he courted, and to admit the plenitude of *Leucippus*: So through policy the excluſion of Vacuity became one of his Principles. This made *Gaſſendus* ſtart new difficulties to him; ſhowing him, that if there were no Vacuity, motion, which was one of his Principles, would be impoſſible: becauſe nothing moves if there be no

void for it *Descartes* to salve that inconvenience, invented his thin subtile matter, whereof he made a kind of engine which he applied to many things; and thereby he reconciled the opinion of Plenitude and Vacuity, according as he stood in need of either. But as Plenitude, and that thin subtile matter got place in the Systeme of *Descartes*, meerly out of complaisance to the relish of the Age, and as an after-game; so his Philosophy seemed weak in the matter of motion, which is one of his Principles. For that Philosopher taught that all motion was created with the World, that there was no new motion produced, and that it did no more but shift from one Body to another: That the thin subtile matter by its impulse, caused all the gravity or levity of Bodies: That the alteration of heavy Bodies in their motion towards the center, proceeded from the same impulse: That heat was nothing but the agitation of the particles of the Air put in motion by the subtile matter, which in his Doctrine

Doctrine was a kind of a Spring fit for all things. That the Vegetation of Plants, and Generation of Animals is performed only by a fortuitous motion of his little Bodies, as a Palace might be erected by a heap of Stones moved by chance: That there is no ſenſation in Animals: That theſe Demonſtrations of Joy, Sadneſs, Amity, and Averſion, theſe impreſſions of pain and pleaſure, that appear in them, are but the effects of a kind of Spring and Engine, that plays according as the matter is diſpoſed: That heat is not in the Fire, hardneſs in the Marble, humidity in the Water; that theſe things are only in the Soul, which finds Fire hot, Marble hard, and Water humid, by its thought, and not at all by theſe qualities, which are but Chymera's. In fine, *Deſcartes*, who would have us begin, by doubting of every thing, to lay aſide all our notices, ſtrip our ſelves of our Sentiments, of Cuſtom, Education, Opinion, of our very Senſes, and all other impreſſions, that we may but learn ſome ſmall inconſi-

derable matter, demands more than he promiſes. And when, to give the reaſon of things, he ſays, they happen by a certain Figure, Motion, or Extenſion, he hath ſaid all; for he dives into nothing, and for all he pretends to be ſo great a Democritiſt, he underſtands not the true Doctrine of *Democritus*. His Syſtem of the Loadſtone with theſe little hooked bodies, theſe hollowed and ſpiral parts, is without foundation. His opinion of the Flux and Reflux of the Sea, by the impreſſion of the Atmoſphere of the Moon, is found falſe by experience; for the parts of Water that are under the Moon, ſwell inſtead of ſinking, as he ſaith. The explication which he gives to all the motions of the Soul in its paſſions by the Conjunction of Nerves and Fibres which are inſerted in the (*glandula pinealis*) is a Dream, for there are no Nerves which terminate at that glandule: he ſays nothing rational concerning ſounds. In fine, it may be ſaid, that he is very like thoſe *Pythagoreans* of whom *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks, who did

did not ſo much endeavour to give a reaſon of the things they explained, as to reduce every thing to their own Principles and Syſtem. However, as he made it his buſineſs rather to ſhow his Wit, than to diſcover the truth; ſo when one is ſo rational as to be ſatisfied with probabilities, he may find enough to ſatisfie himſelf in that Natural Philoſophy: yet that haughtineſs of his Diſciples, who call all other Philoſophers ignorants, is not to be approved of: their minds are dazled with a new kind of Language, and therefore they make a noiſe, as all novelties do. The obſcurity of his expreſſion encreaſed the number of his followers; for in matter of Doctrine that is often found to be the beſt which is leaſt underſtood.

XI.

The Natural Philoſophy of the Chymiſts with their three principles, Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury, hath no Solidity: they are narrow-ſpirited Philoſophers, who being unable to comprehend Univerſal Philoſophy, have ſtint-

ed themſelves to limited Subjects, and thereto ſtinted their own Genius. They may be reduced to three orders. The firſt is, of thoſe that pretend to the knowledge of Nature in general: the ſecond, of thoſe who prepare Remedies: and the third, of thoſe who apply themſelves to the finding out of the Art of changing of Metals, by giving them either new Figures, new Colours, or new Conſiſtence. The firſt and ſecond may be rational, as *Albertus Magnus*, *Van Helmont*, and the Diſtillers are. The third are Extravagant: for to pretend to make new Creatures, is to invade the right of the Creator. As for the Cabaliſts and Judicial Aſtrologers, there is nothing more frivolous than their Natural Philoſophy: neither ſhall I ſpeak of the Phyſicks of *Cardan*, which are all contained in his Books of Subtilitie. But I cannot forbear to take notice, that the Royal Society of *England*; the Academy of Philoſophers lately eſtabliſhed at *Paris*, by Order of the King; the Cares of the late Cardi-

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nal *de Medicis*, to encourage the Learned by his example, and the new piece of Experiments which he cauſed within theſe few years to be Printed at *Florence*; have ſo effectually revived the love of Natural Philoſophy in the Age we live in, that nothing ſeems at preſent more in Vogue amongſt the Learned of *Europe*, than that ſtudy which now-a-days reigns there Univerſally. And Men have advanced in it with ſo much ſucceſs, that it may be ſaid, that within the ſpace of threeſcore years, there have been made more new diſcoveries in Nature, by Experiments, Obſervations, and the Invention of new Inſtruments of Aſtronomy, than had been made for above a thouſand years before. For there is found out an Art of obſerving all the different affections of the Air by the *Thermometer*: there are new Deſcriptions made of the Moon by a Map, which repreſents all its Monthly Appearances, and the Variety of the *Phænomena* which the Shadow makes by Eminencies and Concavities like

to Mountains and Valleys: there is found an Art to obſerve the Courſe of the Stars, with as great exactneſs as the Motion of a Watch, or their ſhadow on a Sun-Dial: and it was in our Age, or but a little before, that Men began to find out Irregularites in the Motion of the Heavens, and Celeſtial Bodies: that is to ſay, in the moſt regular works of Nature that God hath made. In fine, it ſeems that by that virtuous emulation, which hath been of late raiſed amongſt the Naturaliſts of *England*, *France*, *Italy*, and *Holland*, the World hath begun to change its Face, the Heavens to move on other principles, and by other Syſtems, the Air to be more cleared by the knowledge of Meteors, the Sea to become more eaſie for Commerce by the Science of Navigation, the Earth to be better known by the perfect knowledge of Simples, mixt Bodies, Salts, and Minerals, and all Arts to be enobled by new diſcoveries: at preſent there is nothing ſtudied but the finding out of new lights in Sciences, which have been darkned by the

the negligence of preceding Ages; and the ſtudy of Experiments is raiſed to a greater height than ever. What ſhall I ſay of the wonderful Springs of motion in the Heart, the Circulation of the Blood, the Conſtruction of the Brain, the Univerſal Oeconomie of the Body of Man, wherein there are ſo many new ſecrets found out; of all the rare and late diſcoveries in Flies and and other Inſects, whereof the Engliſh have compoſed a great Volume full of Obſervations, which hitherto have been almoſt unknown? If with the ſame ardour they perſiſt in the Study of Nature, by the Obſervations which they have begun to make in all parts of the World, where their Commerce gives them entrance, they may be able ſhortly to publiſh a ſecond Volume of Natural Hiſtory worthy to be ſubjoyned to that of *Pliny*. If I pretended to enter into the retail of all that is found out in Nature by ſtudy and the application of Modern Philoſophy, I ſhould never make an end. But I cannot forget how much that Science is enriched by

by the Works of *Monſieur de la Chambre*, chief Phyſician in Ordinary to the King, who adhering to the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle* hath written on Phyſicks, more ſolidly than others, and in a more florid ſtile. In ſo dry and barren matters, there was never ſo much grace and beauty: and yet his politeneſs leſſens not the force of his reaſons, nor does the flouriſh of his expreſſion take any thing off from the Gravity of his matter. It may be ſaid that he is the politeſt and moſt ſolid of all Modern Philoſophers, and that if Nature her ſelf would explain her ſelf, ſhe would uſe no other terms.

XII.

It remains now to be obſerved, that we may put an end to the Reflexions on Natural Philoſophy, what it is that may contribute to the perfection of that Art, whereof men are ſo fond of late, and what may hurt the progreſs which it ſo juſtly makes in the minds of men. As honour and emulation are chiefly the Soul of Arts and Sciences; ſo they who have a Genius for Natural Philoſophy,

ſophy, whereof the knowledge is ſo important for Society, cannot be too much eſteemed. Yet they cannot be ſufficiently warned to have a care of being ſurpriſed by new Opinions, without ſtrict examination of them, and of eſpouſing the ſentiments of others by a Spirit of Cabal and partiality; they ſhould caſt off that Character, as one of the greateſt hindrances to the knowledge and diſcerning of Truth. Let us exhort them to guard themſelves by the Uſe and Experience of Things, that they may prevent pleaſant Errours, and lay aſide the natural prepoſſeſſion that men have for their own Opinions: but let us likewiſe adviſe them never to be too curious, without ſome little docility, nor to be too docile, without ſomewhat of curioſity. For curioſity without ſubmiſſion leads men out of the way; and too great ſubmiſſion without curioſity guides men into ignorance. Let them know that Reaſon and Experience are the two only ways whereby that Science is acquired: but that Reaſon without Experience hath

no

no ſolidity, as Experience without Reaſon has no exactneſs. Let them not amuſe themſelves to ſatisfie too much the publick curioſity by Novelties: for it is a vanity of the new Philoſophers to make it more their buſineſs to ſay things that are agreeable, than uſeful. Theſe maxims are to be inſinuated to the modern Philoſophers, to imprint on their minds that Character of ſolidity, without which that Science cannot be well handled, wherein there is nothing more to be avoided, than illuſion and uncertainty. Moreover, though there be hardly any thing more to be added to the general Phyſicks, to enrich them with new Principles and Methods, becauſe they conſiſt in a limited perfection: yet it may be ſaid that the ſpecial Phyſicks are of ſo vaſt an extent, that there may be always found new ways to raiſe them to greater perfection. And for all the new Stars that are diſcovered, there will remain ſtill more to be found out. For that is a Stock, which, though it be ſo much already drained by the Studies of

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ſo many Learned, and by the ſeries of ſo many Ages, yet will ſtill prove inexhauſtible.

XIII.

The laſt Reflexion which we have to make on this Science, regards the procedure of Naturaliſts, who in their Reaſonings refer all things to Nature, giving it greater vertue than it ought to have, and ſtretching its power beyond the bounds that the Creator hath preſcribed to it. As *Alcindus*, that *Arabian* Philoſopher, did heretofore, whom *Averroes* ranks among the greateſt wits that ever were; in effect he knew many things: but he made a Treatiſe wherein he imputed to Nature, what is commonly attributed to Spirits, which are above Nature, that is to ſay, to Angels and Demons. So did *Peter* of *Apono* and *Pomponatius*, both great ſticklers for Nature, pretend that all that happened in ſublunary things, was but an effect of Celeſtial impreſſions. And as *Galen* referred every thing to the Qualities of Temperament, *Albertus Magnus* to the Specifick Form, *Marcilius*

lius Ficinus to Planets; ſo *Peter* of *Apono* referred every thing to the Vertue of Celeſtial Bodies, and acknowledged no other Miracles but the changes of Seaſons, as *Du Loyer* aſſures us. This gave occaſion to *Baptiſta* of *Mantua* to call him, *Virum magnæ ſed nimium audacis ſapientiæ; a great Philoſopher, but of too great boldneſs.* That is the common infirmity of ſtinted Spirits, that believe nothing but what they comprehend. *Montanus* ſeems to be a Philoſopher of this Character: he is often incredulous, through a deſire of being too much a Naturaliſt; and he is the more dangerous for Religion, the more he affects not to appear ſo. For by the ingenuity of plain common ſenſe, and of too civil a Philoſopher, he works greater effects on mens minds, with his negligent way of ſaying what he ſays. The Natural Philoſophy of *Deſcartes* raiſes not the Mind above the Senſes: by Bodies alone he explains the moſt ſpiritual operations of the Soul: and an *Engliſhman* of late hath made appear, that in all the Reaſonings of that Philoſopher there is a mechanical

mechanical air that reduces every thing to the method of Art; for which he thinks it dangerous to Religion. But ſpeaking generally, Natural Philoſophy, Medicine, Aſtrology, and Chymiſtry, ſtick too much to Nature, to raiſe men to him who is the Author thereof: they allow too much to the Senſes, to make men able to get above Senſe; and they harden the heart againſt the belief of God, by accuſtoming men to conſider things by too low a view. Unhappy are the Philoſophers of that Genius, who ſubtilize on the Knowledge of the Creature, and ſtick at the belief of the Creator. That was not the Character of the ancient Philoſophers, who had not only higher thoughts than we, but raiſed themſelves above themſelves, that they might acknowledge a Soveraign Reaſon, which they made the Rule of all their Reaſonings, and to which they ſubmitted their minds. In fine, that we may make an end, let us obſerve our ſelves in the judgments we make of Nature, and judge of it with reverence, let us not decide too

boldly

boldly on its operations, whereof Man ought never to judge but with trembling. For to be ſhort, to cenſure Nature is to cenſure God whoſe work it is, and to ſubmit the greatneſs of his Power to our Criticks. Wherein that Prince ſeemed Extravagant, that would have reformed the Fabrick of the World by a falſe Guſto of Philoſophy, which he had learnt from the *Arabians*. True Philoſophy, when it hath attained to its higheſt pitch of perfection, judges of every thing with fear; it ſhakes when it comes to decide, becauſe it knows its own incapacity, by knowing the weakneſs of the mind of man. But when it conſiders the Works of God, it impoſes ſilence on its Reaſon, and bends downwards all its knowledge, as the Cherubims of the Prophet fold their Wings, and humble themſelves before God, that by their own humiliation they may reverence the greatneſs of his Majeſty.

The end of the Fourth Part.

Reflexions

Reflexions
ON
The Metaphyſicks.

I.

NAturalPhiloſophy is the knowledge of natural and ſenſible things: and Metaphyſicks is the Science of things purely intellectual. All other Sciences have a dependance on this; for it ſerves them for Foundation and Method, and without it there is nothing known but imperfectly. That is perhaps the Reaſon which obliged *Ariſtotle* to call that Science the true beginning of Philoſophy, and the nobleſt of Sciences. As it is taken up only about the thoughts, by a view

abſtracted from corporeal and incorporeal beings, ſo it raiſes it ſelf above ſenſe and matter: it leaves the quantity of Bodies to the conſideration of Geometry, and their other qualities to Natural Philoſophy; that it may imploy it ſelf only about being ſeparated from their Individual Singularity, ſuch as are Subſtances, Accidents, Relations, Oppoſitions, and all that can be conceived by an abſtraction from Matter: and that it may only conſider beings that are purely ſpiritual, ſuch as, the Soul, Spirits, Angels, and even God himſelf: wherein it hath ſomething of Divinity. It is for that Reaſon alſo that *Ariſtotle* calls it Divinity or Natural Theology. The end of this Science is the finding out of pure and abſtracted Verity: thereby it perceives things in their original, that it may know them to the full: it enters into the retail of all particular Species, which it reduces to their principles; and that retail is almoſt infinite: this is the Reaſon that without it all the knowledges of man are but ſuperficial and imperfect, becauſe

becauſe there is not almoſt any true demonſtration without its Principles.

II.

The deſign of *Ariſtotle* in his Metaphyſicks is to give Principles to other Sciences, which they cannot have of themſelves; and to eſtabliſh a principal vertue, which might ſerve for a Rule to all other Verities. That Philoſopher hath written twelve Books of Metaphyſicks, whereof the three firſt are preliminary to that Science. In the firſt Book he teaches, that Memory is formed from Senſe, Experience from Memory, and Art and Science together from Experience. He ſhews that Sapience being a perfect knowledge of the firſt Principles, is preferable to Science; that nothing is known as it ſhould be but by the cauſes; and that the ancient Philoſophers have ſometimes ſaid well, without knowing the reaſon why, becauſe they were not methodical in their Science. He teaches that the impreſſions receiv'd from Education and Cuſtom are great hinderances to the knowledge of Truth; and

that to know a-right, we muſt ſeek out the method moſt convenient for the Science we inquire into. He declares in his third Book, That to begin to know we muſt begin to doubt: and that to know Truth a-right, we muſt know Falſity and Untruth: There he refutes thoſe that explain Nature by Fables, deſigning thereby *Pythagoras* and *Plato*. In the ſame Book he examines if one Science may propoſe all other Sciences for its object. He ends with the Notion that he gives of Subſtance; and enquires if there be any other Subſtances beſides what fall under our Senſes, ſuch as Ideas and firſt Matter. Having made this preparation of Queſtions neceſſary to his deſign, he treats in the fourth Book of the Principle object of Metaphyſicks, which is *Being*, abſtracted from Matter, in ſo much as it is *Being*. In the fifth Book he explains the various Attributes of *Being*, and gives a general notion of the terms of Metaphyſicks. The ſixth Book is another Preliminary to the following Books. In the ſeventh

Book

Book he explains the Nature of Subſtance, which is the firſt of *Beings*, what is eſſential to it, and wherein it differs from an *Accident*: In the eighth Book he diſtinguiſhes it into Subſtance material and Subſtance immaterial. There it is that he ſpeaks of the Subſtantial Form, of the Numbers of *Pythagoras*, and the Ideas of *Plato*, which he pretends to be no-ways ſubſtantial. The ninth Book is an Explication of the different kinds of *Being*, of the *Being* actual and the *Being* poſſible, of the Act and the Power, *Actus* and *Potentia*, of the notion and difference thereof; and ends the Book by a Diſcourſe of True and Falſe. In the tenth Book he tells what Unity is, which is the firſt property of a *Being*, he ſhews the oppoſition between Plurality and Unity, he explains how and how many ways one thing is contrary to another, and all the Doctrine of Contraries, which is the ground of the moſt part of the Principles of Metaphyſicks. In the eleventh Book he repeats a great many things already laid down in

the third and fourth Books, and amongſt others, the Method of right doubting, to attain to right knowing: for he that doubts hath a greater diſpoſition to know Truth, than he that doubteth not: becauſe he grounds not the aſſurance of his judgement, but upon the clearing of his uncertainties. Having proved Subſtantial Forms, he teaches in the twelfth Book that there are Subſtances ſeparate from Bodies, and that there are Spirits. All that Diſcourſe tends to the demonſtration of a firſt Mover, and to the eſtabliſhment of a Deity. The two following Books were not come to light in the time of *Thomas Aquinas*. *Poſſevin* in the third Book of his Bibliotheck pretends that they are none of *Ariſtotle*'s: but ſeeing there is to be found in them the ſame Character, the ſame Wit and the ſame reaſoning, all the Learned are of a contrary opinion. It is true, that in his thirteenth Book there are repetitions about the Numbers of *Pythagoras*, and the Idea's of *Plato*: But the fourteenth Book is a Collection of Axioms, Principles,

ciples, Diviſions and admirable Definitions, which he hath gather'd out of the former Books. And though his Metaphyſicks be rank'd in no very exact order, and that in many places thereof there be ſeveral repetitions; it is notwithſtanding a fountain fertile in Notices, Reaſonings, Maxims, and Verities, which are rare overtures for other Sciences: and there is nothing more neceſſary for a Philoſopher, who would know things intimately, than the Metaphyſicks of *Ariſtotle*.

III.

What is more to be wondered at in this Work, *Ariſtotle* is the firſt Founder of that manner of Reaſoning by way of abſtraction, and of ſpeaking of Immaterial Beings, of Spirits, and of God himſelf. For the Philoſophers that went before him, ſpake of ſuch things with little ſolidity. It is true *Pythagoras* learnt from the *Hebrews*, by the commerce that he had with the *Egyptians*, the Unity of one God, and taught it the *Grecians*. But as the *Egyptians* were naturally myſterious and viſioniſts;

Pythagoras took from them the moſt part of their Viſions, concerning Spirits and Intelligences, to which the *Egyptians* aſſigned little ſubtile Bodies, wherewith they filled the World. And *Pythagoras* was the firſt who by that imagination gave occaſion to all the extravagancies of the *Cabaliſts* about Spirits, and to all theſe Fables, whereof the Author of the *Cabala* hath endeavoured to renew the Notion in theſe laſt times. *Plato*, who ſeems to lay down that Doctrine in his Dialogues of *Epinomis* and *Cratilus*, took it from *Pythagoras*, and *Zeno* the *Stoick* had it from *Plato*, as *Lipſius* relates at length. *Apuleius* pretends that *Plato* of all the Ancient Philoſophers, hath diſcourſed beſt of God, of Providence, of divine matters, and of Spirits. It muſt be granted that he appears more knowing in that kind of Science than any of the reſt; but ſeeing he learnt of *Pythagoras* moſt part of what he delivers on that ſubject, it is not ſure to follow him. *Tertullian* ſays, That the *Platoniſts* aſſign'd even a Body to God, as well

well as the *Stoicks*. *Ariſtotle*, who had more reality in his thoughts, ſpeaks in another ſtrain. He had the Art to purge the Verities that he learnt in the School of *Pythagoras* from the raveries of the *Pythagoreans*. As for *Epicurus* he makes Gods of ſo ridiculous a ſhape, that by owning of them he overthrows them. *Zeno* makes his Wiſe-man ſo independant of Providence, and ſo equal to the Gods, that thereby he renders them contemptible: For he leaves Men to think of them what-ever they pleaſe. *Chryſippus* wrote ſome Treatiſes of the Gods and a Deity; whereof *Plutarch* ſpeaks in his Morals; but they are loſt: It is probable he ſpeaks no otherways of them, but in the ſentiments of *Zeno*. There is nothing in all Antiquity ſo rationally written on that ſubject, as the Books of *Cicero* concerning the Nature of the Gods. His ſentiments are as right, and his doctrine as ſound, as the Doctrine of a *Pagan* can be. But that which makes him ſpeak better than others is, becauſe he followed the Doctrine of *Ariſtotle*, and made uſe of his argu-

arguments, to prove a Providence. *Seneca* ſpeaks of a Deity but like a half-knowing man; the Idea that he gives of God, as an univerſal Spirit that animates the World, is not exact: but it ſeems reaſonable what he ſays, that the ſame injury is done to the Gods, not at all to believe them, as to believe them to be other than what they are, and what they ſhould be. All that hath been written ſince by the later *Platoniſts* under the Emperours carries no ſolid character. The moſt part of the *Greek* Fathers, who were all almoſt *Platoniſts*, are not exact in what they ſay of Angels and Spirits, by reaſon of the falſe notions that they learn'd in the School of *Plato*. Since the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, the Exiſtence of God, the Immortality of the Soul, its ſtate of Separation from the Body, good and bad Angels, and the other moſt eſſential truths of our Religion are ſo illuſtrated, that none can now doubt thereof without impiety. *Pomponatius* in the laſt Age, wrote a Treatiſe of the Soul in a ſtrain that drew upon him the cenſures of

of *Rome*. *Agrippa* ſpeaks like an extravagant in all the diſcourſe which he made of God, Religion, and Intelligences, in the third Book of his Secret Philoſophy. *Ramus* exceedingly ſlighted the Metaphyſicks, wherein he ſeems not very judicious. He would have joyn'd to the Body of Philoſophy, the knowledge of the Liberal Arts, that he might more ſecurely cut off the Metaphyſicks. But amongſt that fearful multitude of Writings hatch'd in the duſt of the Schools of theſe laſt Ages, there hath been nothing compoſed with greater penetration and capacity, than the Metaphyſicks of *Suarez* the *Jeſuit*. That piece, which contains all the ſubtility and force of the Schools, is one of the wonderful productions of theſe laſt times. It cannot be too much recommended to young Divines, who by a falſe appetite to a new method forſake the Scholaſtick way in their diſputes, that they may become Hiſtorians: becauſe it is leſs trouble to them to make an oſtentation of their memory, than to give proofs

of

of their judgement. There hath been in these last times a croud of Commentatours, who in a profound stile have written on the Metaphysicks of *Aristotle:* amongst others *Fonseca* a *Portuguese* Jesuit. Sir *Kenelm Digby* is too abstract in his Treatise of the Immortality of the Soul. The Metaphysical Meditations of *Descartes* have been held in reputation; for he hath dived into these matters more than others. In his first Meditation he teaches man to doubt well, that he may know a-right: he proves in the second, that the Thought is more sensible and better known than the Body. The third is a Demonstration of the Existence of God. The fourth, a Method of discerning of Truth and Falshood. The fifth treats of the Essence of material Beings. The sixth explains their Existence: and the Conclusion is a real Distinction betwixt the Body and the Thoughts, for the establishing that great Principle, *I think, therefore I am*; to which may be added his Answers to the Objections of *Gassendus*, which have

have the ſame force as the reſt of his Works. *Willis* an *Engliſh* Phyſician hath written rationally *of Separated Forms*. There are not many Works compoſed in theſe laſt times of ſuch a nature: wherein the Speculations of Natural Philoſophy take up the minds of men, more than thoſe of Metaphyſicks. It were to be wiſhed that men would employ them in ſubjects that are capable thereof: but the Idea and Deſign of ſome Speculatives is not to be approved, who mingle too much Metaphyſicks with Religion: which ought to be handled more plainly, and in a leſs abſtracted manner than other ſubjects; becauſe there is nothing more real, nor more ſimple.

IV.

Though this Science be ſo much enquired into already by the Works I have been ſpeaking of, yet it might ſtill be more improved by Reflexions that might be made on the Principles and Reaſonings of *Ariſtotle*, becauſe what conſiſts in Conceptions and Ideas cannot be limited: but there is need

need of a diſpoſition proper for Reflexion and reaſoning in ſuch an eſſay: for that Science reaſons, and reflects on its reaſonings more than others. Yet it meets likewiſe with great Obſtacles in its procedure; whereof the firſt is, that it marches (to uſe the word) by ways not much frequented, and by unknown paths, having nothing ſufficiently eſtabliſhed; for it hath hardly any true Definition, or exact and compleat Diviſion: and ſeeing it gives occaſion to many doubtings, it furniſhes Matter of Diſpute, there being none of the Principles thereof that can be univerſally agreed upon. The ſecond obſtacle is the natural timidity of the mind of man, which looks upon Metaphyſicks, being abſtracted from Matter and Senſe, to be above its ſtrength: whereby it becomes like to thoſe timorous and ill-aſſured Travellers, who go by ways that they know not. The third Obſtacle is, a great number of hard and barbarous Terms, obſcure and perplexed Definitions, thouſands of Conceptions

tions and Reaſonings hatched in the Duſt of the Schools, which render that Science deſtitute of the uſual Charms of other Sciences. The fourth is a ſtock of wrangling, and a heap of thorny and diſpleaſing Queſtions, fitter to confound than inſtruct the mind. The laſt Obſtacle is, the rarity of Spirits fit for that Science. Spirits that are either too profound or too ſuperficial are not proper for it. By the too great profoundneſs of meditation men are apt to fall into a black and melancholick Philoſophy: as it happened to *Agrippa* in his Metaphyſicks. And by the vivacity of an aiery and ſuperficial wit, they are apt to evaporate in empty and ſpongie imaginations: as it befel *Cardan*, who wandered among the Viſions of the moſt chymerical Philoſophy in the World; and as it happens daily to wits that have no foundation. There hath lately come abroad a Treatiſe of Metaphyſicks, printed at *London*, and compoſed by *Henry More*, which overturns all the Reaſons that *Deſcartes* makes uſe of to prove the exiſtence of God, and which

which overthrows the moſt part of his Meditations. That were no great matter, if that *Engliſh* Philoſopher did not wound *Deſcartes* in his Religion, when he declaims againſt his Natural Philoſophy, which he would have paſs for Libertiniſm, as well as that of Mr. *Hobbes*. The *Carteſians*, who are jealous of the honour of their opinion, have Reaſon to make their zeal flaſh out againſt that Author, by juſtifying the reputation of their Maſter. There might be a great many other Reflexions made, if theſe Metaphyſical Ideas were not ſo obſcure. Let us now ſee, before we end this diſcourſe, what is the uſe that is to be made of Philoſophy in matters of Religion, which ought indeed to be all the fruit of it. For men are not over tender of Religion, when once they become Philoſophers.

The end of the fifth Part.

Reflexions

Reflexions

ON

The Uſe which is to be made

OF

PHILOSOPHY,

IN

Matters of Religion.

I.

THE firſt Inſtrument that Religion makes uſe of to prove its maximes, is Reaſon; and Reaſon cannot be rightly employed but by Philoſophy, which reduces it into method by giving it principles. It is therefore important

that Philoſophy it ſelf ſhould be ſound, that it may ſtamp a right Character on the mind, and conduct it ſecurely in a way, which one cannot miſtake or loſe without Eternal Ruine. And therefore it is that *Lactantius* ſays, that Philoſophy is of great uſe to a Man, when he hath once got ſome Tincture of Religion. But Men may eaſily abuſe ſo advantagious a means, by the bad uſe that the mind of Man may make of it, when it yields to the conduct of paſſion, intereſt, or prejudices. This made *Callicles* in *Plato* ſay, that Philoſophy taken the wrong way was able to ſpoil Religion. There is therefore great circumſpection to be uſed as to that. Faith is an Heavenly Unction, that will eaſily corrupt in a mind infected with falſe Doctrine. And as any Liquor would be ſoon ſpoiled in an impure Veſſel: ſo nothing is more capable to alter the purity of Religion, than the impurity of ſentiments wherewith it is received. It is not that one muſt needs be a Philoſopher, to be a Chriſtian, nor that the Wiſdom of the World

World is a rule to the Wiſdom of Heaven. But that the reaſon of Man being ſubmitted to Faith; Faith how Divine ſoever it be, condeſcends to make uſe of Humane Reaſoning, to bring Reaſon to its Obedience. So that it cannot be abſolutely pure, if Philoſophy, which is the Inſtrument that it makes uſe of, be not ſo likewiſe. This obliged St. *Paul* to admoniſh the Primitive Chriſtians to beware, *leſt any Man ſhould ſpoil them through Philoſophy, and vain Deceit, through the Traditions of Men, according to the Rudiments of the World, and not after Chriſt.*) The World was ſo infected with the different opinions of ſo many Philoſophers, that a Chriſtian needed all his Wits about him to guard himſelf from that danger. For *Tertullian* obſerves, that the Primitive Hereſies ſprang only from the opinions, wherein thoſe that were the Authours of them had been bred. Philoſophy ill underſtood, ſaith St. *Auguſtin*, made the *Egyptians* Worſhip the Sun and Stars. The *Valentinians*, againſt whom St. *Ireneus*

writes, came out of the School of *Diogenes* and *Epicurus*; the Gnosticks out of *Plato*'s; and the Manichees out of that of *Pythagoras*. *Martian* became Heretick by the Doctrine of *Zeno*; and *Manes* took the principles of his opinion from a Saracen Philosopher, whom St. *Epiphanius* mentions. St. *Jerome* assures us that it was the Morality of the Stoicks that made the Pelagians fall into errour. But what happened in the Primitive Ages by that manner of dependance which Religion hath on Philosophy, is come to pass in the last. *Possevin* observes, that it is incredible how many Libertines and Hereticks the reading of *Averroes* made in *Europe*. *Alphonsus* King of *Castile* censured the Workman-ship of God, by Criticising on Nature, and grew impious by the study of the Arabian Philosophers, and by the pleasure he took in the ravings of a Spanish Jew, who found out the motion of Trepidation in the Firmament. *Agrippa* spoiled his spirit by the reading of *Porphyrie*, *Proclus*, and *Plessus*, that is to say, by the Phi-

Philoſophy of *Plato*, as he himſelf confeſſes. *Cervetus* a Spaniard, and *Socinus* an Italian, made only uſe of Philoſophy, to make Innovations in Religion. And it is pretended that the Philoſophy of *Deſcartes* was at firſt well received in the North, becauſe it ſeemed to favour the opinion of *Calvin*, which is in greateſt Vogue there: for the principles of that new Philoſophy lead a Man to believe that the Creature in its freeſt Actions, acts only by the impulſe of the Creator, and that it is God alone that wills in the willings of Man. In fine, nothing tends more to the corruption of the Heart, than the corruption of Doctrine; and there is nothing that overthrows Religion, ſo much as the vain Reaſonings of a falſe Philoſophy. It is not by the School of Errour and Lying, that one becomes a Diſciple of truth: neither was it by the inconſtancy and levity of Humane Opinions, that the Apoſtles became the Pillars of Faith. That was alſo the reaſon that moved the Fathers in ſome

counſels, to order the Profeſſors of Philoſophie not to teach any Doctrines that were prejudicial to Religion.

II.

It much concerns a Chriſtian then, not to make uſe indifferently of every kind of Philoſophy, ſeeing the uſe of it may prove ſo dangerous: it is even Prudence to make ſure in the choice that is to be made amongſt ſo many different opinions, as have paſſed current in all Ages. But what aſſurance is there amidſt ſo many clouds wherein Truth is commonly wrapped up? to which may be added the obſcurity of Natural things; the weakneſs of the Spirit of Man; the erroneouſneſs of the Judgement of the Senſes naturally Impoſtrous: in a word, Opinion and Paſſion, which are perpetual hindrances to Natural evidences; as well as all theſe idle and curious Speculations, to which Philoſophers are ſubject, & which ſerve more for oſtentation and the Pomp of Science, than the conduct of the Mind, and edification of manners. Whence appears how empty and vain Humane Wiſ-

Wiſdom is, whereof all the Light can only ſerve to ſeduce and lead Men out of the way: Becauſe, ſaith St. *Auguſtin*, God hath concealed Truth from Man, as well for the puniſhment of his crime, as to inſtruct him of his miſery. Wherefore that we may not miſtake our ſelves, let us begin to ſtudy what is to be believed, before we ſet our ſelves on Reaſoning. Let us regulate the uſe of our Faith, that we may regulate the uſe of our Reaſon: let us be Chriſtians before we be Philoſophers: let our firſt Wiſdom and our chief Philoſophy be our Religion. Men learn to reaſon by Philoſophy; but they learn to ſubmit their minds to Reaſon and eternal Verity, by Chriſtianity. Let us know the duties thereof by the ſtudy of the Law, which is, ſays St. *Chryſoſtom*, the rule of Knowledge and Truth: That we may learn that method of Reaſoning which may be moſt ſutable to it, let us apply our ſelves to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which the pride of Pagan Philoſophers could never comprehend, and our Reaſon will ſettle it ſelf upon ſo

ſolid a foundation: becauſe there is nothing but Faith, that can give bounds to the mind of Man, ſtay the inconſtancy of his Reaſon, and fix it on its object. Let us not expoſe our ſelves to the agitation of our vain Reaſonings, which are apt to carry us further than we ſhould go. Happy is he, who admidſt the waves of this Sea, which is always toſſed with the errours and opinions in Religion that reign in the World, hath taken the courſe to ſtick cloſe to the immoveable foundation of the Word of God.

III.

Religion is then the firſt Principle according to which Humane Wiſedom is to take its meaſures: ſo that all the different methods of ancient or modern Philoſophy, all the new Syſtems of Natural, and all the new Maxims of Moral Philoſophy, may be good, if they be not contrary to it. For the Goſpel ought to be the rule of our ſentiments. What is not conform to that Rule, leads to diſorder. The Doctrine of *Plato* or *Ariſtotle*, *Gaſſendus* or *Deſcartes*, is not to be eſteem'd, but in ſo much

as

as it favours Religion; which ſhould be the firſt of all Philoſophies. Let us forſake all the reſt, for all other Sciences are but illuſion, and every other Light but a tranſitory flaſh, fitter to amuſe our curioſity than to ſatisfie our mind. To ſpeak properly, we know things but as in dream, and are ignorant of them in effect: Yea, and we would pitty our own ignorance, if our vanity kept it not from our Knowledge. The moſt frivolous Queſtion in the World, divided all the minds of Antiquity: and after almoſt three thouſand Years of diſpute, it is not as yet well decided. *Thales* and his Diſciples until *Plato*, ſays *Plutarch*, have denied a Vacuity in Nature, thoſe that follow'd after, to begin with *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, and to continue until our new Atomiſts, have taught it. Men diſpute thereon ſtill every day, and come to no agreement. That degree of Certainty, which was heretofore with ſo many Reaſonings ſought for in the Academy, tended only to uncertainty. In fine, the knowledge of Man ſtaggers always in doubting and heſitation;

and

and Truth is only come into the World by *JESUS CHRIST*. Faith alone can teach that Divine Philoſophy, which none of the Great Men of the World have been able to know. To open our Eyes to ſo pure a Light is the way to be illuminated. It was not by the force of Syllogiſms and Arguments that Men were convinced of that Philoſophy; but by the Simplicity and Ignorance of thoſe that publiſhed it in the World: the *Greeks* and *Romans* ſubmitted all their pride and haughtineſs of mind to the Goſpel; whoſe vertue was ſo powerful, that it made its Firſt-Diſciples its greateſt Votaries. It is Faith then, which ought to make all the Wit and Knowledge of man: for he that ſhall follow his own Underſtanding, will undoubtedly loſe himſelf.

IV.

Faith having undeceived man of the counterfeit gliſterings, which ſhined in the Philoſophy of the Heathens, it accuſtomed him to diſpute no more about thoſe things, which God hath not ſubmitted to Reaſoning, and taught him

that

that it is better not to know what God hath thought fit to conceal from him, and with a reverent ignorance to adore the Secrets, which he hath not revealed to us, than to undertake to ſound that Abyſs of knowledge, by the raſhneſs of our conjectures, and the faint views of our Reaſon. To this Divine beam of Faith, the Faithful took pleaſure to ſacrifice all theſe inſolent curioſities, which made them too raſhly examine the works of God, by examining of Nature; and to ſtifle all the proſpects of that proud Reaſon, which addict them to the Creature, to make them revolt againſt the Creatour. It was by the rays of that moſt Heavenly Light, that the Chriſtian came to underſtand that it was better to be ſubmiſſive, than to reaſon in matters of Religion; that the ſmalneſs of Wit was ſomewhat more advantageous to make a man a Believer, than all the force and acuteneſs of Underſtanding; and that the ſimplicity of Faith was preferable to all the luſtre and reputation of Science; becauſe that the works of God, which

which carry the greateſt marks of his Omnipotency and Character, are thoſe which we leaſt underſtand: ſo that there is nothing more reaſonable than to humble Reaſon, and to ſubmit it to the direction of Eternal Reaſon, which is the Rule of all other Reaſons; and the rather, ſeeing that there is no kind of Science, which depends not on ſubmiſſion, that it may ſettle it ſelf by its Principles. Is it juſt that Men ſhould exerciſe a kind of tyranny upon our belief and upon our minds, for things indifferent, ſuch as are Arts and Sciences, and that we ſhould take our freedom as to Religion? We are told things incomprehenſible in the name of *Deſcartes*, from which we reap no advantage; we take them on their bare word: And having moſt credible Myſteries delivered to us in the Name of God, which aſſures us of Eternal Life, ſhall we not believe them?

V.

When Reaſon is once ſubmiſſive, Philoſophy which is its rule may be uſeful to explain it. That is the firſt uſe that is to be made of Philoſophy in Religion. So it was that *Anatolius* B. of *Laodicea*, S. *Jerom*

Jerom, S. *Auguſtin*, *Theodoret*, *Didymus of Alexandria*, *Boetius*, S. *John Damaſcen*, and many others, began firſt amongſt Chriſtians to give vogue to the Philoſophy of *Ariſtotle*: which afterwards was continued by the Fathers and Divines in the Church, to defend the Chriſtian Religion againſt Paganiſm and Hereſie. And though our Religion be not grounded on human Reaſoning, but on the ſimplicity of a pure Faith, which is always oppoſite to the weak and corrupt mind of Man: yet it is lawful to underprop that Faith by all the force of Human Reaſon, when once it hath begun to give law unto Reaſon. And ſo does God Almighty, who draws light out of darkneſs, ſpeak to us by the Mouth of Men, as by the moſt proportionate inſtrument to the weakneſs of our Underſtandings: and yet that Inſtrument diminiſhes nothing of the Dignity of him that employes it. The moſt profane Creatures are as ſo many voices which publiſh the Glory and Holineſs of the Creatour; and what is even moſt ſtupid and dumb in Nature ſerves to inſtruct us in the knowledge of God:

and

and ſhall not the words, the reaſon, the terms and expreſſions of *Ariſtotle*, be made uſe of by us in ſpeaking of Religion, becauſe they are the words and expreſſions of an Heathen? What reaſon have we to boggle at them, after that all the Learned and Pious Men, who knew and lived in the purity of Chriſtian Religion as well, if not better then we, have ſo employed them; let us ſtick to a Cuſtom Authorized to us by the example of theſe Holy Men. And whatever may be objected to us, let us never give cavelling Atheiſts, and the Enemies of our Religion, the ſatisfaction to change the Language of the Church, by the uſe of new Philoſophies, which Men would bring in credit; ſeeing that the Ancient Philoſophy, beſides terms of Explaining, may likewiſe furniſh Religion with a Method of Reaſoning.

VI.

VI.

Beſides the terms and method which Philoſophy may furniſh Religion with, to ſerve it as an Inſtrument in what it thinks and ſays, it may likewiſe afford it reaſons, to arm thoſe that defend it, and diſarm its Adverſaries. It was Philoſophy that firſt began to open the great Book of the World, for an inſtruction to the Learned, and Unlearned and by the beauty of the Creatures, to declare to all the Nations of the World, the Greatneſs and Power of the Creator. It was ſhe that by her Leſſons raiſed the Spirit of Man from the Knowledge of ſo many wonders, to the knowledge of their Original, by diſcovering to him the Cauſe of theſe admirable Effects. It was Philoſophy which made Man underſtand that voice of the Heavens and Stars, which declare the Glory of God, that he might come to the knowledge of his greatneſs. By that marvellous ſucceſſion of Day and Night, by that conſtant and uniform revolution of Seaſons, by that Order and Harmony of Elements, and of all the

the parts that compoſe the Univerſe; as by the loud ſound of a Trumpet, that Science publiſhed the Divinity of ſo great a Maſter, by expoſing to view the lineaments of ſo perfect a work. It was Philoſophy in fine, which taught *Pythagoras*, *Hippocrates*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, and *Ariſtotle*, who were the ſolideſt Heads of Antiquity, the Unity of the Godhead; whereof they themſelves were convinced by the bare and ſimple contemplation of this great Theatre of the World. But that which ſerved to inſtruct theſe Great Men in ſo important a truth, ſerved only to puzzle and confound the proud minds of a great many ſtinted Souls, who, as St. *Paul* ſays, became vain in their thoughts, and their fooliſh heart was full of darkneſs, and when they profeſſed themſelves to be wiſe, became Fools: becauſe they rendred to the Creature, the Honours that were only due to the Creator; by the wrong uſe that they made of their Reaſon and Philoſophy. They applied themſelves to the ſtudy of Nature, without reverencing

rencing the Authour thereof. Thus it hapned with *Epicurus*, who pretended that Natural Philoſophy was fit for nothing but to ſtifle all theſe kinds of fears which the impreſſions of Religion may cauſe in the Soul. On the contrary *Plato* made uſe of Natural Philoſophy only to prove the exiſtence of God, by the exiſtence of the World: as a Workman is known by his Work. And *Ariſtotle* reduces almoſt all his reaſonings about motion, to that admirable demonſtration of a firſt mover, which *Avicenna* takes to be one of the moſt evident demonſtrations of the Phyſicks of that Philoſopher. So true it is, that it is but only an infirmity of mind, that makes Men ſo uneaſily believe what is propoſed to them by Religion. For when one hath reaſon, it is no trouble to him to uſe it, by ſubjecting the ſame in ſuch ſubjects, where it ought to be ſubmiſſive.

VII.

Theſe are the chief uſes that may be made of Philoſophy in matters of Religion; wherein it may likewiſe give weight to the Reaſonings that are employed for eſtabliſhing the maxims thereof: it may ſerve to unmask Impoſtures, the errour whereof diſguiſes it ſelf under ſo many different ſhapes: it may repreſs that immoderate liberty, which the Wiſe of the World take to themſelves of inquiring too curiouſly into matters which exceed their capacity: it teaches Reaſon not to ſtartle at things which ſeem moſt incredible, when it hath once been able to make it perceive the Authority of God, by reviewing theſe admirable Idea's of the Virtue of the Goſpel; wherewith a ſmall number of Fiſher-men by their ſimplicity triumph over all the Wiſdom of *Athens* and *Rome*, and by their Patience and Humility render themſelves Maſters of the Miſtreſs of the World. In this manner it was that *Origen*, who thought himſelf obliged, as *Euſebius* aſſures us,

to

to juſtifie his conduct in his application to the ſtudy of Pagan Philoſophers, as not unbeſeeming a Chriſtian, made uſe of Philoſophy, and gave even rules how to uſe it, by ſhewing Chriſtians, that Men ought only to be Philoſophers, to ſettle themſelves in the Faith, and therein to become impregnable: by the ſame principle aſſuring them, that Philoſophy ought not to be conſidered, but as an Inſtrument of Religion. What he explained to them by that judicious reflexion, was the ſame that St. *Clement* of *Alexandria* had done before him: ſaying, that it ſeemed God was pleaſed to give a pattern of that conduct, by what he inſpired into the Iſraelites; when he ordered them to make uſe of the riches and ſpoils of *Egypt*, to adorn the things that concerned Religion and his Worſhip. For *Origen* recommended nothing ſo much to the Chriſtian Philoſophers, as the reading of the Holy Scriptures; and to read them with an attention ſutable to the Heavenly Truths which ſo Divine Books contained, that they might attain to the knowledge of Sacred

cred Myſteries, by ſingleneſs of heart and humility of mind. And inſtead of diſputing about Religion, as Men diſpute about indifferent things in the Schools, he would have Men adore with reverence the Majeſty of Holy Myſteries, and believe incomprehenſibility with ſubmiſſion. Thus it was, that that Learned Man made uſe of prophane Sciences, and Secular Philoſophy to guide his Diſciples to Jeſus Chriſt, and to raiſe them to Faith, as St. *Jerom* aſſures us.

VIII.

Theſe Terms, that Method, and theſe Reaſons, which Philoſophy may furniſh Religion with, would not be ſufficient, if it did not likewiſe give it a kind of diſcretion, to prepare the mind to the Light of Faith, by the Light of Nature, which is the firſt principle of the operation of the Soul. For it happens that Man is often deceived, and that unhappineſs may proceed, ſaith St. *Auguſtin*, from the weakneſs of his Heart, though it proceeded not from the wickedneſs and preſumption of his

his mind. And ſeeing the Philoſopher is more ſubject to that than the ſimple ignorant, that Holy Father concludes in the ſame place, that Man ſhould not become a Philoſopher, but that he may think on Eternity which is his end. That gave occaſion to *Thomas Aquinas* to begin his Treatiſe of Religion againſt the *Gentiles*, by this Queſtion, *What is the Obligation of the wiſe Man*, and the chief duty of a Philoſopher: and he concludes, that it is *to ſearch the Verity, which is the Original of all Verities*, as he proves by the Teſtimony of *Ariſtotle*. That was likewiſe the chief ſtudy of the Primitive Chriſtians, who were Philoſophers: and not only made uſe of their Philoſophy to find out the Truth of Religion: but likewiſe to teach it to thoſe who were ignorant thereof, and to defend it againſt thoſe that attacked the ſame. In that manner did St. *Juſtin*, *Tatian* his Diſciple, *Athenagoras*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who were the firſt Philoſophers of the Chriſtian Religion, employ their Philoſophy to

maintain their Faith, by justifying their Conduct against the Calumnies of Pagans, and overthrowing the false notions that were put into the minds of the people. In that manner *Tertullian* made his Zeal manifest in that admirable Apology, which he made of Religion; where amongst so many other reasons, which so just a cause as that which he handled might furnish him with, the life of Christians was one of the chief; that life so pure, so holy, so far above sense; that fidelity, dis-interestedness and Charity wherewith all their actions were animated, which made them pray for those that persecuted them. And in fine, their innocence served him as a living Image of the Holiness of the Gospel they preached, to stop the mouth of Errour and Imposture. *Origen* took another Method against *Celsus*, who having been a Jew turned Pagan. He proves the Verity of Christianity by the Divinity of Jesus Christ: by making appear, that nothing is objected against Jesus Christ, which may not be objected against *Moses*. Seeing that Jesus Christ, cannot be the fulfilling of

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the Law, as he is, but it muſt the ſtrongeſt proof of the Authority of the Law giver. For, if he be not the Truth the Law and all the Prophets are but a Lie. St. *Hippolitus* makes uſe of another Argument: *Ye cannot conceive*, ſays he to Un-believers, *the manner how ye are formed, and ye dare pretend to know the Eternal Generation of the Son of God.* It is not by curioſity, but by ſubmiſſion that one becomes a Believer. Faith manifeſts its Light only to him who can blind his reaſon: and for all its obſcurity, it deſerves adoration even of thoſe who underſtand it not. Among the other Arguments of *Minutius Felix*, there is not any ſtronger than this: The belief of an Infidel leading only to doubting and uncertainty, he ſhould do as does a Traveller, who finds himſelf amongſt many ways, and knows not the right. If he be wiſe he ſtops, not daring to follow any of them in the doubt that he is in, and being unable to follow them all: which Libertines do not, who having no other ground

for their Libertiniſm, but their uncertainty; yet ſtill purſue the wrong way and perſiſt in their Errour, being unable to take the reſolution which the ſillyeſt people do in their moſt ordinary affairs, not to act on any doubt; for it is prudence to endeavour to be ſure in what one doeth. It is upon the Vanity and Falſity of Idols, and the extravagance of the Pagan Religion, that St. *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius* his Scholar, *Euſebius* Biſhop of *Ceſarea*, and St. *Cyril* of *Alexandria* eſtabliſhed the Chriſtian Religion. The Treatiſe of *Theodoret* concerning Providence, and St. *Auguſtins* Book of the City of God, are moſt Learned and Solid Apologies for our Faith, full of profound Learning and admirable Eloquence. And this was the way that all the Fathers almoſt employed their Science and Philoſophy, every one in his own Method to defend Chriſtian Religion, which was attacked by all the violence of the powers of the Earth; by all the Learning of Pagan Philoſophers, and by all the wickedneſs of Hereticks.

IX.

IX.

But as the primitive Chriſtians were more taken up to defend their Religion againſt its Enemies, and to be always ready for Martyrdom by a pure and holy Life, than to unfold the Myſteries of our Faith: ſo the moſt part of the ancient Apologiſts contented themſelves to juſtifie their Belief againſt the calumnies that were raiſed againſt it, without explaining the ground of their Religion, that they might not profane holy things, by diſcovering them to Infidels, It was neceſſary in the Infancy of the Church to veil from the World corrupted with Idolatry, the new Spirit of our Faith, whereof the Pagans were not capable. But ſince our Eyes in theſe laſt Ages have been accuſtomed to the light of the Goſpel, it hath been thought more fit to unfold the Sanctity of our Auguſt myſteries, than to obſcure them under ambiguous terms; and this hath been the courſe that the later Apologiſts have follow'd. *Thomas Aquinas* in his Work againſt the Gentiles, ſhews in the firſt three Books of

of it, That there is nothing in the Christian Faith but what is conform to the light of Nature: and in the fourth he teaches, that though it be highly elevated above the wit of Man, yet it contains nothing contrary to Reason. *Savanarola* hath gathered all that is solid in the Fathers on that subject: to which he hath added this argument which is properly his own. If our Religion be not true, a Christian is the most monstrous thing in Nature: he is wise and a fool at the same time; wise in his manners, a fool in his Belief: his mind is erroneous, and his heart upright. His Will is orderly, and his Reason irregular; his Understanding is out of the way, though he have innocence and probity for its guides. In fine, he is but a Hodge-podge of Truth and Falshood, of Purity and Corruption. In the same manner, says that Divine, If *JESUS CHRIST* be not God, he is at the same time the most holy and the most flagitious Person that ever was. For it is the greatest of crimes to desire to be taken for a God, when one

one is not. How could it be, that ſo much Vertue ſhould be founded on ſo great Injuſtice? that the proudeſt Man that ever was ſhould be the Maſter of the moſt perfect notion of Humility that can be? that ſo holy a Doctrine as the Goſpel ſhould be the Work of an Impoſtor; and that ſo perfect a Morality, ſhould be eſtabliſhed on ſo great a Wickedneſs? The Treatiſe of the truth of Faith compoſed by *Ludovicus Vives*, is an Abridgement of all that the Fathers have written upon Religion, reduced into Method. One of his ſtrongeſt Arguments, is the accompliſhment of the Prophecy of *Hoſea* concerning the deſtiny of the *Jews*, which he handles in his third Book, and whereof Saint *Auguſtin* ſpeaks in the eighteen Chapter of the 28. Book of the City of God: but which ſeems not to be ſet off to all its advantages by *Vives*; for there is nothing more convincing to a ſolid mind, than a Prophecy delivered near a thouſand years before it come to paſs, and which is literally verified throughout the whole World,

World, for above these sixteen hundred years. The Work of *Marcilius Ficinus* is nothing almost but a proof of the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, justified by the Prophets of the old Testament, by the Miracles of the New, and by the truth of the Doctrine which ignorant men without passion or interest have preached, who never deceived any, nor were ever deceived themselves. I shall wave the Writings of a great many modern Apologists, which are every-where extent, for proof of the verity of Christian Religion; which having been once settled upon the foundation of the Word of God, has stood unshaken amidst the Revolutions of Empires, fortifying it self maugre the tempests raised against it in the World, by no other defence but that of Patience and Modesty. What I have said of others, may suffice to give a Christian Philosopher an Idea of the use he should make of his Philosophy, in imitation of those Great men, who have only employ'd it for the establishment and defence of Religion. For all things well

well considered, that is the only solid and real enjoyment of this Life. The truth is all things else being transitory and perishing, the true Wisdom is to think of Eternity, and to be a good Man is the best of Philosophies.

FINIS.